Emotional Labor of Domestic Violence Shelter Workers

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SUMMARY

This Master's thesis research examines the emotional labor of domestic violence shelter workers primarily working with diverse populations. The theoretical framework is Hochschild's theory of emotional labor, which is work that 'requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others'. Workers can manage their feelings by changing their outward appearance, or self-inducing and displaying feelings through conscious mental work.

The research data consists of the interviews of six current or former employees at two different domestic violence shelters, collected in an urban city in the United States in the summer of 2014. The interviews followed a standardized open-ended question pattern. The method of theoretically informed empirical analysis is utilized to analyze the data with guidance from Hochschild's theory. The interest of this research is to discover what kind of emotional labor is involved in work at a domestic violence shelter, and how it affects the workers' private lives.

It emerges that the organizational context expects shelter workers to empower their clients, enabling them to survive independently after they leave the shelter. Workers must be mindful of a variety of matters that might affect the clients' recovery process. They react to their trauma in different ways, and their cultural perspective could explain some of the obstacles they face in leaving the abuser. The most common form of emotional labor among shelter workers appears to be the act of hiding or suppressing different emotions, such as frustration, or becoming emotionally affected. As a consequence of this labor, workers experience stress and mistrust of men, yet consider the positive impact of helping and empowering abused women to be a great motivation.

Due to the small sample size, quantitative generalizations of these findings cannot be made. However, this qualitative data and the analysis offer information about emotional labor in a very particular context; in this locality, there were discernible patterns connecting the individual interviewees. It is concluded that the satisfaction of helping others may outweigh the negative effects of emotional labor, and suggested that training for workers should include a section on this practice.

Key words: emotional labor, domestic violence, shelters, battered women, empowerment, diversity, minorities

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tässä pro gradu -tutkielmassa tutkitaan työntekijöiden emotionaalista työtä turvakodeissa, joiden asiakkaat ovat valtaosin etnisiin vähemmistöihin kuuluvia naisia. Teoreettisena viitekehyksenä toimii Hochschildin teoria emotionaalisesta työstä. Se määritellään työksi, jossa tunteiden aktiivinen herättäminen tai tukahduttaminen itsessä johtaa ulkoisesti havaittaviin olotiloihin, joiden tavoitteena on saada aikaan tiettyjä tunnetiloja toisissa ihmisissä. Työntekijät voivat hallita tunteitaan muuttamalla ulkoista ilmettään tai tietoisen psyykkisen työn kautta aiheuttamalla itsessään tunteita ja ilmaisemalla niitä.

Tutkimusaineisto koostuu kuudesta silloisen tai entisen turvakotityöntekijän haastattelusta, jotka kerättiin suuressa kaupungissa Yhdysvalloissa kesällä 2014. Haastattelurunko koostui kaikille haastateltaville esitetyistä avoimista kysymyksistä. Tutkimusmetodina käytetään teoriaohjaavaa sisällönanalyysiä, jonka mukaisesti aineistoa analysoidaan Hochschildin teorian valossa. Tutkimusintressinä on selvittää, millaista emotionaalista työtä turvakodissa tehdään ja miten tämä työ vaikuttaa työntekijöiden yksityiselämään.

Tutkimuksesta käy ilmi, että turvakoti odottaa turvakotityöntekijöiden kykenevän voimaannuttamaan asiakkaansa ja siten mahdollistamaan heille itsenäisen selviytymisen turvakodista lähdön jälkeen. Työntekijöiden on huomioitava monia seikkoja, jotka voivat vaikuttaa asiakkaiden toipumisprosessiin. Asiakkaat reagoivat traumaansa eri tavoin, ja heidän kulttuurinen perspektiivinsä voi selittää joitakin väkivallantekijän jättämistä vaikeuttavia tekijöitä. Turvakotityöntekijöiden yleisin emotionaalisen työn muoto vaikuttaa olevan erilaisten tunteiden, kuten turhautumisen tai syvän liikutuksen, peittäminen tai tukahduttaminen. Tämän työn tuloksena työntekijät kokevat stressiä ja epäluottamusta miehiä kohtaan, mutta pitävät silti kaltoin kohdeltujen naisten auttamista ja voimaannuttamista hyvin motivoivana.

Haastateltavien pienestä määrästä johtuen tutkimustulosten määrällinen yleistäminen ei ole mahdollista. Kuitenkin tämä laadullinen aineisto ja sen analyysi tarjoavat tietoa emotionaalisesta työstä hyvin erityisessä kontekstissa, ja tässä aineistossa yksittäisten haastateltujen välillä oli huomattavissa yhdistäviä tekijöitä. Lopuksi todetaan, että toisten auttamisesta saatu tyydytyksen tunne saattaa ylittää emotionaalisen työn negatiiviset vaikutukset, ja ehdotetaan tähän käytäntöön tutustumista työntekijöiden koulutuksessa.

Asiasanat: emotionaalinen työ, lähisuhdeväkivalta, turvakodit, voimaannuttaminen, monimuotoisuus, vähemmistöt

Contents

1 Introduction

During a 24-hour period in September 2013, 87 percent of identified domestic violence programs in the United States participated in the National Census of Domestic Violence Services. These 1,649 programs served over 66,500 people experiencing domestic violence over the course of one day, providing them with individual support or advocacy, children's support or advocacy, court accompaniment, transportation, and social service system advocacy, among other forms of assistance. There were over 36,000 adults and children in emergency shelters or transitional housing provided by local programs, while another 30,000 people received non-residential assistance and services. Throughout the year 2013, there were at least 1,400 programs offering emergency shelter services to victims of domestic violence across the United States. (National Network to End Domestic Violence: Domestic Violence Counts 2013.) There is a remarkably large need for a plethora of services in the field of domestic violence. Seeking for help at a domestic violence shelter is the only option in many cases, and being admitted into one could make a considerable positive impact on the person's life.

"A woman entered our shelter after she fled her abusive husband. She had been living in her car for a week before coming to us. Since she's been in the shelter, she has been able to increase her security, continue to care for her teenage children, obtain a job, and is now planning to move into her own home."

- Advocate (National Network to End Domestic Violence: Domestic Violence Counts 2013)

In the approximately 1,400 programs with emergency shelter services in the United States, an unspecified number of professionals work tirelessly to provide support and assistance to those suffering from abuse. It is the responsibility of these workers to help their clients rebuild their lives and recover from the devastating consequences of violence. Dworkin (1993, 238) illustrates the predicament of a battered woman: through years of abuse, she has learned to blame herself, to see herself as worthless, and become too afraid to say anything. As people such as this one enter the safety of the shelter, it is imperative that the workers are able to facilitate their healing process as thoroughly as possible. This requires a special type of strategy for work and a sensitive understanding of what the clients may have experienced.

For all the work done in domestic violence shelters, the aim is to enable the residents to become survivors and lead a violence-free life. Given the traumatic reasons that

forced them to leave their homes and seek shelter, the workers that come into contact with them must be knowledgeable about domestic violence, and capable of giving them hope for a better future. This process has to move forward at a pace and in a manner that suit the client. As a result, shelter workers are often obliged to set aside their personal thoughts and expectations. They can do this by employing the tool of emotional labor, which stands for ways to manage feelings in order to arouse certain emotions or states of mind in others (Hochschild 1979, 1983).

Research has been done on the topic of emotional labor with different types of victim advocates, including domestic violence shelter workers. There is also information on violence and discrimination experienced by women of color, and on the considerate approach that is needed when working with minority populations. However, to my knowledge, there have not been significant attempts made at combining all of the aforementioned dimensions into one study. It is this gap that I place my research in. The purpose of this Master's Thesis is to examine the emotional labor of domestic violence shelter workers in a context with diverse populations. I am interested in what type of forms their emotional labor takes, and how this work affects them. To explore the topic in depth, I interviewed shelter workers in an urban city in the United States.

A global movement for ending violence against women is focused on combatting an epidemic of injustice. Around the world one in three women is beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime (Amnesty International 2005). This is by no means a marginal problem but one that is concrete and in effect worldwide. As an internationally oriented feminist, I am committed to learning as much as possible about the topic and making a positive difference in the lives of any survivors I might encounter. I hope to work in this field for a long time, and therefore, it is essential that I take this opportunity to gain an understanding of the special nature of the work done at domestic violence shelters. It is truly fortunate that my research data represents a diverse perspective as well.

In public discourse as well as many professional settings, it is common to use the word 'victim' to refer to those who have been abused. However, the term 'victim' has undesirable connotations, connected to being damaged, passive, and powerless (Best 1997, 13). Dunn (2005, 21) suggests that the term 'survivor' emphasizes agency and strength, constructing a less pathetic image of battered women. Personally, I prefer the more respectful term of 'survivor' when speaking of anyone suffering from violence; however, much of the literature I quote from uses the term 'victim'. Unfortunately, this has an effect on the language I am able to use. My interviewees mostly referred to 'clients' or 'women' – this may be partly due to the wording of my interview questions, in which 'client' was used.

1.1 Shelter Workers: Domestic Violence Trained and Trauma-Informed Professionals

It should be noted that one cannot simply become a domestic violence shelter worker – there are certain requirements a candidate must fulfill before he or she can be hired. In the state from which the data for this research was collected, there is a professional board that regulates and supervises work done in the field of domestic violence. All volunteers and workers must complete a state-mandated 40-hour training at an approved site. The board sets a standard for professional services provided to victims of domestic violence.

The 40-hour training covers a variety of domestic violence topics and special issues. Insight is given into definitions of domestic violence, the cycle of violence, as well as different types of abuse and its dynamics. Trainees learn ways to identify victims/survivors and to understand their barriers for leaving. State and federal laws are discussed with a focus on legal options for victims in different situations. Attention is given to populations with complex and unique issues, such as immigrants, the LGBT community, teenagers, the elderly, and those with mental health issues. Tasks like answering hotline calls and safety planning are practiced in class, and interactive teaching methods are used to ensure in-depth learning. The topic of vicarious traumatization or secondary trauma is also introduced, followed by tips for its prevention through self-care. Completing the training provides individuals with plenty of useful tools for working in the field of domestic violence. [1]

Powell-Williams et al. (2013) describe a similar training in which the educational facilitators included a shelter supervisor, a service coordinator, legal advocates, and a domestic violence counselor, among others. All the presenters had at least ten years of work experience from these positions. (Ibid. 263.) For comparison, a Finnish helpline for women encountering violence also arranges a 40-hour training for volunteers wishing to respond to phone calls (Women's Line Finland website). Having completed a 40-hour domestic violence training myself, my experience was that in terms of emotional labor, the training prepared participants for assuming a neutral or supportive position in client interactions. The topics covered were at times quite shocking and thought-provoking. Having been able to discuss our reactions in the educational environment was beneficial, and I felt more equipped to deal with different work situations. By knowing about potential challenges, trainees can expect less surprises that would distract them, and have tools for reigning in their reactions in order to focus on providing assistance to survivors.

[1] For the purpose of protecting the anonymity of the interviewees, no references are provided for the above paragraphs.

In addition to being 40-hour trained, it is strongly encouraged that the worker be familiar with trauma-informed methods. Covington et al. (2008) suggest that both staff members and clients should learn about the physical and psychological effects of trauma and abuse. Female victims of trauma are highly vulnerable to re-traumatization as well as self-destructive behaviors, and would benefit greatly from learning coping skills. Understanding trauma and its effects can make a significant difference in the way staff members approach their work and clients. (Ibid. 390.) Indeed, social work students' self-confidence in working with traumatized children, youth, and their families gained a remarkable boost through a clinical elective focusing on trauma theory and problem-based learning (Strand et al. 2014).

A study with focus groups of female victims of intimate partner violence catalogues some physical and psychological effects of abuse. The women described experiencing constant muscle pain and fatigue, as well as headaches, weight issues, immune dysfunction, and breathing problems. Unexpected encounters with the abuser or heightened stress made these pains worse. Even after the perpetrator had been criminally prosecuted, the women continued to suffer from symptoms like depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and flashbacks. Fear was constantly present in their lives. Memories of abuse were often triggered by feelings of pain in the body, retraumatizing the victim and making their daily lives frustratingly difficult. (Cerulli et al. 2012, 777–778.)

It is imperative that shelter workers are sensitive to the type of issues described above. The smallest things may trigger clients at any given time, reminding them of past hardships and making them unable to function normally. An understanding of trauma will therefore enable workers to provide better services to clients. Harris and Fallot (2001) advocate for the use of five core principles in all trauma-informed care: safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. All staff members must understand the impact of violence and victimization on the lives of the clients, making sure that all interactions aim at their recovery and against the possibility of re-traumatization (Elliott et al, 2005). Thus, domestic violence shelter workers should be well-trained professionals and trauma-informed service providers.

An important topic covered in the 40-hour training, and one that could manifest itself in shelter workers' personal lives is vicarious traumatization, which Lerias & Byrne (2003, 130) define as the "response of those persons who have witnessed, been subject to explicit knowledge of or, had the responsibility to intervene in a seriously distressing or tragic event". Similarly, Figley (1995) defines secondary traumatic stress as "the natural consequent behaviors and emotions resulting from knowing about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other – the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person".

The symptoms are similar to those of post-traumatic stress disorder and may include re-experiencing the client's traumatic event in dreams or through reminders, detachment or estrangement from others, difficulty in concentrating or falling asleep, and exaggerated startle response. Secondary traumatic stress is seen as a natural consequence of caring for traumatized people. (Ibid. 7–8, 11.) Workers need to be able to recognize these symptoms in themselves and have sufficient tools for tending to them.

Quiros and Berger (2015) criticize traditional trauma theory for being too focused on the experiences of white, well-educated, middle-class women and men, thus failing to consider diversity in the form of race, ethnicity, class, immigrant status, and sexual orientation. Many social work clients have experiences of marginalization and discrimination related to these factors, and while they are not traditionally considered as 'traumatic', it is argued that this type of systemic oppression can be remarkably stressful. (Ibid. 150, 152.) Sue et al. (2007) emphasize the importance of training staff to recognize their own biases and prejudices, and to take action to overcome them. This is central especially when serving diverse populations.

1.2 Everyday Work at the Shelter

The data for this research consists of six interviews I conducted with professionals who were at the time working or had previously worked at two different domestic violence shelters for women in an urban city in the United States. One shelter had room for 15 adult residents and some children, and the other for 45 adults and their children. The following is a generalization of work done at these two locations, as described in the interviews.

I(6): A typical day would be answering hotline calls, answering the door, doing case management with assigned clients, and [with] other clients doing counseling. That's most of it.

I(5): Sometimes it's just to make a phone call to an agency about housing, public aid, counseling, working, stuff like that. Sometimes it's just taking them to appointments, or showing how to get there, how to take a train or bus, and how to come back.

While there are certain routines involved in work at the shelter, as illustrated above, most interviewees agreed that there is no typical type of day. Situations are constantly changing and require great flexibility from the worker. For most of them, work duties include the aforementioned case management with assigned clients, which consists of tasks such as finding

housing or employment, applying for financial aid or other types of public assistance, and discussing legal options. Especially for those working with immigrants, assisting with questions and setting up appointments was a central part of the job. Other duties vary from observing the completion of chores or serving food, to setting up group activities for the clients or their children, and general shelter maintenance. Workers must also be prepared to provide emotional support or counseling to clients at any given time.

At the start of each shift, it was important that the worker was up-to-date with the current situation at the shelter. This could be achieved by communicating with co-workers, walking around the house, or reading the shift log, which detailed what had happened with each client during previous shifts. During their shift, workers would check on the residents regularly, as well as make sure everything was in order throughout the house and no rules were being broken. At the end of the shift, they completed their paperwork before transferring responsibility to the next staff member coming in.

An unpredictable part of the work day was answering hotline calls. When someone called the hotline seeking shelter, the worker had to ensure the person fit the criteria for the program. They would ask questions about the abuse and explain the shelter rules. It was necessary to make sure the potential client would be able to live in a communal environment, with people who may be very different from herself. If her situation required any extra support, it had to be within the limits of what the shelter could offer. Before accepting a new client, the worker had to consult a co-worker or supervisor as well.

Prior to a new client's arrival at the shelter, the workers prepared a set of basic necessities for her – blankets, pillows, and toiletries, among other things. Upon her arrival, an intake process took place. Information was gathered about the client's demographic characteristics, the nature of the abuse, as well as the abuser. Depending on the client and how much she was willing to share, the intake process might include plenty of emotional support (in response to crying or a breakdown) and thus last longer. The new client was also given a tour of the shelter and an overview of the rules, especially that of confidentiality.

According to the interviewees, the client base at these two shelters is very varied. The women represent different ethnicities, nationalities, and cultures, and "they all react to their trauma differently". A client may be very quiet and avoid talking about her experiences, or seem like she is doing quite well, or express strong anger. While they all have experienced domestic violence in some form, each of their situations is unique. Workers must thus be highly sensitive to their specific needs in order to provide them with the right type of support. At the same time, they are also expected to maintain order at the shelter, making sure that clients do not break any

rules or disrespect other clients. It was expressed that finding a way to be both understanding and strict is challenging.

It seems quite clear that working at a domestic violence shelter requires a complex set of skills. There are various work duties and often not enough staff, which can be draining. At any given moment, a hotline call may disrupt the schedule, forcing the worker to prepare for the arrival of a new client. It can thus be difficult to establish routines into the work day. One must be able to multi-task and be in control of several things at once, which can be rather demanding.

While it would undoubtedly be easier to have standard reactions that work with every client, it is apparent that they must be responded to as individuals. The worker should ideally take into account the social context or background of the client and her traumatic experiences with domestic violence, as this will allow for an understanding and efficient approach to providing services. Case management should be tailored to meet the needs and personality type of each client for it to make the greatest impact possible. Staff members must be able to successfully navigate through this maze of demands. The 40-hour domestic violence training can prepare workers for some of this, but there are many lessons that can only be learnt in practice. Theoretical knowledge of violence and client work will be tested under pressure: how well can the worker adjust and respond to regular and crisis situations on busy days? In order to handle the stress, one should be strongly motivated to stay in the field.

1.3 Research Objective and Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to examine domestic violence shelter workers' labor through the lens of Hochschild's (1979, 1983) theory of emotional labor. By analyzing shelter workers' accounts of what they do, I hope to form an image of this widely researched phenomenon in the particular context of diverse populations. I am specifically interested in finding out *what kind of emotional labor*[2] *work at a domestic violence shelter involves*, as well as *what type of effects shelter workers have experienced in their private lives due to their work at the shelter*. The primary focus is on the first question. The second question aims at exploring the consequences of said labor.

In Chapter 2, I review relevant literature on the different dimensions of my thesis topic. I start with emotional labor, progressing to domestic violence and its specific forms against women of color; the last two sections contain occasional side commentary on their connection to

[2] The concept of emotional labor is fully explained in 2.1.

emotional labor. The chapter on research methods explains the process of data collection as well as introduces the method of theoretically informed empirical analysis. I have included some reflections on my position as the researcher to account for the potential impact of my perspective on the research process. Chapter 4 focuses on the analysis of the interview data from the perspective of my theoretical framework. I begin by establishing the organizational context of shelter work, move on to describing the significance of trauma and cultural issues, and elaborate on what emotional labor is in practice. I finish the analysis with a consideration of the effects of emotional labor on the worker. In the final chapter, I summarize my research, and provide suggestions for further research and discussion.

2 Theoretical Concepts

This chapter covers the theoretical background of my research. First, I explain the concept of emotional labor, both in light of the original theory by Hochschild (1979, 1983) as well as some criticism towards it. Relevant research on emotional labor is also discussed. The first section finishes with comments on how the aforementioned theory and research are utilized in my thesis. Next, I discuss gender-based violence, defining the term and limiting the scope of my examination to violence against women – more specifically, to domestic violence. The dynamics of domestic violence are elaborated on to illustrate the complex context of the shelter workers' profession; they have much to consider in order to successfully interact with their clients. Finally, I touch upon the theme of racial inequality in the form of violence against women of color, an important point to reflect on given the diversity represented in my research data.

2.1 Emotional Labor

In a classic theory by Arlie Hochschild, emotional labor is defined as work that 'requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others' (Hochschild 1983, 7). This type of work often requires face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact. Hochschild names surface acting and deep acting as ways of managing feelings. Surface acting simply means changing one's outward appearance, often by means of body language or expressions. This may feel "put on" for the person engaging in surface acting. In deep acting, a display of feeling is a natural result of working on feeling, of conscious mental work. One can self-induce real feelings (happiness or sadness, for example) and express them spontaneously. In both methods, the actor uses a conscious intervention in order to produce either an appropriate feeling or an outward appearance. (Ibid. 35–36, 147.) In the context of interacting with clients at the shelter, workers may have to hide their shocked reactions to gruesome stories of violence by adopting a calm facial expression or controlling their posture (surface acting). Or, alternatively, they might coax themselves into feeling empathy towards the client, resulting in a corresponding outward display (deep acting).

Deep acting can be understood as managing emotions or 'emotion work'. It is not only 'control' or 'suppression', but more broadly the act of evoking or shaping, as well as suppressing, feeling in oneself. When an individual becomes conscious of a discrepancy between what they feel and what they want to feel (or ought to feel), they may attempt to eliminate the

problem by working on feeling. (Hochschild 1979, 561–562.) One might try to stir up a feeling they wish they had, or try to block or weaken an unwanted feeling. This is often a response to a feeling that does not fit the situation and requires change. For example, one might feel as if they are not affected strongly enough by bad news, or in the realm of relationships, either pretend to love someone or deny one's feelings. (Hochschild 1983, 43–46.)

In institutions, there are formal rules that set limits to the emotional possibilities of everyone involved. Employers have some 'degree of control over the emotional activities of employees'. (Hochschild 1983, 53, 147.) When dealing with survivors of violence, shelter workers must adopt a highly sensitive approach. For example, displaying concern and interest in a client's well-being is appropriate, while questioning the validity of their experiences is not. It would seem highly likely that shelter workers are in need of much emotion management in their demanding job.

Hochschild (1983) builds her theory on observations in the airline industry. Airlines follow a corporate logic, aiming at making profit through competition for passenger markets. When airlines cannot compete in price, they focus on service instead, focusing their demands on flights attendants in particular. They have the most contact with passengers, and must be able to effortlessly 'project' a certain type of image. They are expected to smile continuously and sincerely in order to express a company feeling. A potential feeling of being 'phony' reveals the commercial nature of emotional labor in this context, as the flight attendant does not genuinely feel like smiling. (Ibid. 90–92, 98, 127, 136.) The theory is over thirty years old, and its ability to speak for phenomena in modern cheaper airlines, for example, is questionable.

Bolton (2005) offers a critique of Hochschild's work, pointing out that she does not make a 'distinction concerning feeling rules in the workplace that are not commercially motivated' (ibid. 63). She suggests that other bases for emotion management should also be considered. She argues that in some occupations, professional feeling rules are adhered to because of status or altruistic reasons, not for financial ones. These performances of emotions are sincere. In addition, a worker's sense of self will not completely disappear despite the organization's demands for discipline – they will still have 'hopes, dreams and aspirations'. (Ibid. 99–101, 105.) In the context of work at domestic violence shelters, which are often run by not-for-profit organizations, it is evident that capitalist gain is not the goal of emotional labor. The vast majority of the workforce in this field can be expected to support the agenda of the domestic violence movement: ending the violence and providing services to those who have been abused.

Consistent with this idea, Hearn and Parkin (2007) remark that when violence is central in the relations between the organization and the client, the emotional pain and damage must be addressed. This full recognition of violence is a special organizational context. In survivors' organizations, anger from violations can be transformed into action, which can lead to powerful organizational processes and dynamics. (Ibid. 176.) Emotional labor with this type of foundation aims at helping people and creating social change; financial profit is not an end goal. Any proceeds are likely to go towards providing better services.

Hochschild (1983) suggests that a successful commercialization of feelings leads to worker satisfaction in how personal the service she provided was. Deep acting helps accomplish this and to avoid feelings of phoniness. (Ibid. 136.) Ashforth and Tomiuk (2000) take this idea even further, arguing that deep acting can result in surface authenticity – a reflection of actual feelings in the form of emotional expression or display. Deep authenticity, on the other hand, occurs when one has internalized (or would like to do so) the 'display rules of a specific identity', and their emotional expression is consistent with this role. The service role becomes a part of the self. The person in question acts the part they identify with regardless of their current feelings, because they 'believe in it'. (Ibid. 194–195.) This concept of deep authenticity may help to understand shelter workers' identification with their professional role.

Despite the shortcomings of the original theory, it does offer useful theoretical concepts for understanding emotional labor, and has been widely used in various contexts. In the following, I highlight some research that is relevant in terms of my specific interest in domestic violence shelter workers. The findings I bring forth resonate with many themes in my interview data. For example, Hochschild (1983) notes that workers appear to adopt one of three stances towards their work. Firstly, they may identify strongly with their job, and thus, risk burnout. Secondly, the workers might distinguish themselves from the job and be protected from burnout, but with the cost of feeling insincere. Thirdly, they could opt for a clear distinction between themselves and the job, resulting in estrangement from the work and withdrawal of all emotional labor. All of these options have potential for harmful consequences, and in all of them, the worker must find a way to 'adjust one's self to the role' while allowing 'some flow of self into the role' but minimizing 'the stress the role puts on the self'. (Ibid. 187–188.)

There have been numerous research findings that fall in line with Hochschild's aforementioned notions. For example, Goldblatt (2009) noted a continuum of nurses' emotional responses to encounters with abused women. These ranged from strong identification and consequent emotional overwhelming, to a complicated mix of anger and compassion to a woman who decides to stay in a relationship, to total avoiding of emotional involvement. The second

situation required emotion work, as the nurse in question recognized her judgmental attitude as unprofessional. In the last example, anxiety and helplessness were avoided by focusing only on the medical-physical aspect of the profession. (Ibid. 1648–1649.)

Another study on nurses focused on those working with abused women, and found that they move along a continuum of responses to different types of patients or circumstances, depending on what level of engagement or detachment is deemed necessary in each situation. In general, a high degree of emotional engagement was valued, however there was a significant minority that placed more emphasis on detachment and objectivity. The majority also recognized the dangers of 'too much' emotional engagement: it could render a nurse incapable of working. Especially in emotionally demanding circumstances, being able to find a balance between the two is essential. (Henderson 2001, 132–133.)

Looking into emotion work and the victim advocate role, Powell-Williams et al. (2013) remark that advocates attempt to maintain 'boundaries' in order to avoid becoming too emotionally involved with victims, which may eventually lead to burnout. They manage their emotions by altering their expectations of themselves and victims, often going from wanting to 'save' women to accepting their choices. They often redefine themselves as 'option givers' rather than 'saviors'. This act of developing a 'thick skin' enables them to become less vulnerable emotionally. (Ibid. 267–268, 270.)

In their study of emotional labor at an abortion clinic, Wolkomir and Powers (2007) noted that the clinic staff divided their patients into three categories based on their initial interactions with them, and responded to each 'type' of patient with different coping strategies. 'Easy' patients knew what action they wanted to take and were comfortable with their decision, and the workers fully invested in helping them. The emotional ties and the feeling of helping others allowed them to find their work meaningful and satisfying. On the other hand, 'hostile' or 'ambivalent' patients often made staff feel unappreciated or that they had failed to help. In response to this, they 'did all they could', then 'stepped back' and detached themselves from the patients to protect themselves from feelings of failure. With 'very hard' patients, such as very young minors, or victims of sexual assault or domestic violence, no reproductive choice would be able to fix all their problems. Therefore, the staff drew boundaries around a piece of the patient's situation that they could help with, focused on that, and decided to let go of the rest. They were thus able to invest emotionally in the patients, feel like they had been able to help, and not feel like failures. (Ibid. 161–165.)

For the most part, the abortion clinic workers had been able to find a balance between the needs of the job and the self. Their strategies were effective, and while their work

was often very stressful, they also found it to be important and rewarding. From detachment to investment, the staff responded to different situations with different coping strategies, creating a flexible repertoire of responses to emotional labor. However, it was noted that even these coping strategies were not always enough to protect workers from distress, burnout, and diminished work performance. (Wolkomir & Powers 2007, 166–167.)

A study on sympathy work among victim-advocates and counselors found that being able to sympathize with clients is very important. When clients behave in ways perceived as 'difficult' by the staff members (for example, lying or returning to the abuser), their feelings of sympathy may begin to diminish. In order to re-establish the steady flow of sympathy, the workers developed a set of strategies to look past the 'difficult' behavior. These included deflecting the blame elsewhere (most notably to the abuser) and reconstructing clients' victim-biographies. (Kolb 2011.) Should the client not fit into the frame of a 'perfect victim', a shelter worker may need to engage in emotional labor in order to conceal her reactions. Erickson and Ritter (2001, 156) found that workers who hid their agitation reported higher levels of burnout.

Contrary to popular belief, emotional labor might not always lead straightforwardly to emotional exhaustion or burnout (see e.g. Wharton 1993). Indeed, Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) discovered that 'people work' employees did not report significantly higher levels of emotional exhaustion as compared to employees in other occupations. The act of hiding negative emotions may have a connection with emotional exhaustion, but the more surprising finding of the study was that employers felt quite accomplished in their jobs when their customer contact was more frequent, intense, and varied in terms of emotional expressions. It was suggested that the expectations of friendly and empathetic service, and the workers' deep acting based on these principles, may in fact lead to worker satisfaction in the quality of the provided services. (Ibid. 31–33.)

According to James (1989), emotional labor requires a set of complex skills from the worker. They must be able to 'understand and interpret the needs of others', as well as produce an appropriate response. They must also be highly aware of both individuals and group dynamics. In addition, the workers are expected to carry out all other work responsibilities as well. Anyone can learn these skills if they wish to or must do so, however, some practitioners are more likely to be successful. (Ibid. 26.) This definition of emotional labor adds a layer of understanding to the work done at domestic violence shelters. In my reading of the interview data, I employ these sentiments as a method of finding expressions of emotional labor. [3]

[3] A more thorough explanation of this process can be found in 3.2.

In a study based in the United Kingdom, three emotional laborers were interviewed in depth in order to recognize and value both emotional labor and the skills involved in it. It was discovered that it is important that nurses 'appear' caring in front of their patients, and that this can be communicated through tones, expressions, and body language. Nurses should be able to change their own emotions to match with those of the client. This demonstrates understanding of the situation of the patient. At times, it requires blocking one's feelings and 'dragging up new ones from somewhere'. Furthermore, it seemed evident that defining and explaining caring and emotion work to others was difficult, and that this type of labor is generally not appreciated in the wider society. (Staden 1998, 151–154.)

Care is a concept that is connected to emotional labor, while used in a slightly different context. Anttonen and Zechner (2009) define care loosely as taking care of another person's physical or psychical needs, which can be heavy physical work, or simply presence. It includes care of children, adults with needs, and especially that of the elderly. Care is organized differently according to culture and time, but it often involves duty, commitment, and listening to the needs of the person being cared for. In Nordic countries, an understanding of care as work that requires pay is a central idea in democracy and equality. Yet, it often pays less than many other jobs of a similar level. In research, care is at times associated with informal unpaid care, while emotional labor is perhaps more closely connected to regular employment. (Ibid. 17–18, 24, 27.) In my research, the shelter workers mostly focus on their clients' emotional and psychological well-being. They are paid to do this type of care work. While they can be expected to have some level of commitment, it could be speculated that their work may feel less like a duty than caring for one's relatives, for example. By quitting their job they can end their obligation for emotional labor, but there are societal pressures that strongly urge to honor family ties.

For the purposes of this thesis, emotional labor is considered an essential part of domestic violence advocacy and client work. In this context, 'empathy'[4] is seen as a way of doing emotional labor – workers must be able to 'understand and interpret the needs of others', as well as to produce an appropriate response (James 1989, 26). The research described in this section has been useful in my analysis, and supports my findings in many ways. Shelter workers' strategies towards emotional labor are not only individual approaches, but utilized by other professionals in different contexts as well. I refer to relevant literature in my analysis section to demonstrate some of the shared aspects of emotional labor across professions.

[4] The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines 'empathy' as 'the feeling that you understand and share another person's experiences and emotions: the ability to share someone else's feelings'.

2.2 Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence and violence against women are inextricably linked concepts. The United Nations, in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), defines violence against women as 'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life' (Article 1). Furthermore, the United Nations recognizes violence against women as "a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women", and is concerned about the special vulnerability of minority, indigenous, refugee, and migrant women, as well as female children. (Ibid.)

Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:

> (a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
>
> (b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
>
> (c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.
>
> (Article 2)

Keskinen (2010, 243) remarks that gender-based violence is not only violence against women, but also includes male-on-male violence, women's violence towards children or female partners, hate crimes on sexual minorities, and so-called honor violence on young women by several family members. Within a single Master's thesis, I cannot address all of these forms of violence. My interest is specifically in violence against women. This is the theoretical and political frame where I place my thesis research, continuing a tradition of feminist activism for gender equality. While there is no question about the existence of other types of violence aside from male-on-

female, my specific focus is on (male) violence against women. Around the world one in three women is beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime (Amnesty International 2005). I take a stand against this injustice in my research. My use of gender-specific pronouns in this context is intentional.

An understanding of this phenomenon is necessary for all professionals that come into contact with women who have a history of violent experiences. Workers' inability to recognize signs of victimization or offer support and assistance may place women in further danger. For example, Warshaw (1993) noted that both nurses and physicians at an emergency ward ignored or avoided addressing very strong clues or explicit information about abuse. While medication was given, the reason for seeking help – injuries inflicted by another person – was neglected. Questions about the woman's relationship to the person that had abused her and their living arrangements could have resulted in addressing her safety, as well as referrals and information about resources such as shelters or counseling. These preventive measures were not taken, however. Workers may have wished to avoid asking personal questions or overburdening busy nurses with extensive patient advocate duties. (Ibid. 136–142.)

Keskinen (2005) discovered in her research of Finnish family counseling clinics that violence may be only one of many issues discussed during client sessions. It was sometimes seen as a representation of other, more relevant issues within the family. These units are specifically oriented towards children's problems, which often overshadowed the impact of witnessing violence experienced by their mothers. (Ibid. 232–233, 238–239.) Similarly, it can be easy to focus on the medical aspect of violence-induced injuries within a hospital setting.

In certain professional contexts, the official purpose of the institution (e.g. tending to physical symptoms) may override the importance of the underlying problem with violence. Domestic violence shelters are in a unique position due to their specific focus on victim advocacy and empowerment. Considering that by the time she arrives at the shelter, a woman may have encountered several officials or professionals that have been less than understanding, the shelter workers' approach to the new client is of substantial significance. They must be educated on the topic of violence against women in order to produce appropriate responses in their client interactions. The worker must be aware of their attitudes towards violence and avoid any sort of victim-blaming (Hannus 2011), as this could have a negative impact on the client. A strong knowledge base on the phenomenon will enable the worker to engage in the type of emotional labor that will improve the clients' chances of healing from their trauma. In the following section, central themes in the field of domestic violence are covered.

2.2.1 Domestic Violence: Hurt by Loved Ones

Much of the violence women face takes place in intimate relationships – abusers, rapists, and murderers are often current or former partners of the victim (Husso 2003). In my native Finland, which is widely considered a model country in terms of equality, a nationally representative survey found that 20 percent of women had experienced violence or threats of violence in their current relationship, and 49 percent had such experiences in a previous relationship (Piispa et al. 2006). In the United States, a national survey revealed that 36 percent of women had experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner – an estimated 42 million victims (Black et al. 2011). The issue in question is undoubtedly serious and widespread. While harmful traditions such as female genital mutilation, sex trafficking, and dowry-related violence have an impact on countless women around the globe, I have limited the scope of this research to domestic violence. This is an umbrella term that encompasses the concept of intimate partner violence, among others.

Saltzman et al. (2002) have identified four main types of intimate partner violence: physical violence, sexual violence, threats of physical or sexual violence, and psychological/emotional abuse. Intimate partners include current and former spouses, marital, and non-marital partners. (Ibid. 11.) As this particular research focuses on domestic violence shelter workers, it is logical to employ a more inclusive definition of domestic violence in which the perpetrator can also be a family member other than the intimate partner. According to the United States Department of Justice (2015), domestic violence is 'a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner'. It can be 'physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.' (Ibid.)

A commonly used tool for explaining the dynamics of domestic violence is the Power and Control Wheel (Picture 1, see below), which was developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP) in Duluth, MN. The wheel contains the most common abusive behaviors or tactics used by men against women in intimate relationships. It is purposefully not gender-neutral, aiming to emphasize power differences between men and women. (DAIP website.) In addition to physical and sexual violence, seen at the rim of the wheel, abusers use a variety of tactics to control women, from threats and coercion to emotional abuse and isolation. The wheel is a tool that is commonly used for educational purposes for both professionals and

volunteers and those who have been abused, especially in the United States. It has also been adapted to fit other contexts, such as teen dating violence and violence against immigrant women. A considerable number of the people working in the field of domestic violence will likely have seen some form of the wheel at some point in their career.

Picture 1: The Power and Control Wheel.

Source: Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP) www.theduluthmodel.org

Used with permission.

In her research with female victims of intimate partner violence, Husso (2003) discovered several tactics that are in keeping with the Power and Control Wheel. Jealousy, for instance, is used as a

way to justify violence, especially in situations where the man is in danger of losing control. Fear of violence forces women to constantly monitor the abuser's state of mind in order to avoid confrontation. It may become increasingly difficult to even consider leaving, especially if there are death threats involved. At the same time, by staying they risk more physical and other violence, as well as being labeled a masochist and having provoked the violence. The circumstances in which the women make decisions are terribly limiting and challenging. Not only is their ability to function normally significantly lowered, but they also feel isolated and lonely. (Ibid. 107, 145, 164–165, 188–189.) Against this background, questions such as "Why doesn't she just leave?" start to appear insensitive and irrelevant.

Dworkin (1993) demonstrates the reality of being a battered wife by explaining the process of isolation due to non-reaction from others. Neighbors, friends, and family may see bruises and injuries, knowing who caused them, and yet take no action. If reaching out for help systematically results in nothing, one learns not to speak of the violence. Any hope for escaping thus becomes lost. (Ibid. 238.) It may seem counter-intuitive that the people closest to the victim would not come to her assistance. However, considering that even trained professionals in different institutions have difficulties in addressing clues of violence (Warshaw 1993), the inability of laypersons to intervene is quite understandable. Moreover, they might have a positive relationship with the perpetrator, and would find it hard to believe that he could be violent.

While it has become more acceptable to end relationships and marriages, there is still shame attached to having been abused. It is considered unbelievable that a woman would not immediately leave a violent man. Especially in a Finnish context, where cultural ideals of gender equality and agency place high expectations on relationships, abused women carry shame of their 'failure' to create and maintain an equal partnership. They had the right to choose their partner and are terribly embarrassed about having ended up abused. (Husso 2003, 116, 262–263.) This mindset is another factor that explains why reaching out for help can be very difficult.

Outsiders are commonly found to blame the women for being abused and/or not leaving early enough. Unfortunately, the women themselves often do the same. Piispa (2004, 36) noted that young women (aged 18 to 29) associate violent incidents with arguing and intoxication, emphasizing their own role in what had happened. Husso (2003, 118) suggests that it may be easier to assume partial responsibility for violence than to accept its unpredictability and the personal inability to fight back. Views such as these are problematic, for they shift blame away from the perpetrator, suggesting that women can avoid victimization by carefully adjusting their every word and act to please the violent aggressor. It is quite clear, however, that no amount

of compliance is enough to protect them from harm – the abuser will always find an excuse or justification for his behavior.

Men who have been treated for their violent behavior might explain their actions by referring to their assumptions about the female partner's infidelity, whether or not they had any solid evidence. Others found the woman's refusal to have sexual intercourse insulting. They regarded sex as a man's right in an intimate relationship; thus, the woman was seen as controlling. In these situations, fighting and violence appeared to be their only solution. (Nyqvist 2008, 131, 140–143.) It is quite common that men deny their violent behavior or avoid talking about it (Hearn 1998). Näre and Ronkainen (2008, 27) suggest that violence in intimate relationships and within the family does not bring masculine glory to the perpetrator, but is instead shameful to men as well. This could partly explain their unwillingness to discuss such issues.

Both male abusers and their female victims have a tendency to blame the woman and her behavior for the violence. Jokila (2008) analyzed a resolution by the Finnish Supreme Court, in which a female had been gang-raped by three men. The discussion had revolved around whether or not the woman had joined the men willingly to go to a private apartment, whether she had expressed her non-consent aggressively enough, and whether the physical signs on her body signified violence or normal, passionate sexual intercourse. Luckily for the woman, her story was close to that of an ideal rape victim, who was sexually inexperienced and had resisted her previously unknown attackers strongly enough. (Ibid.) Proving one's innocence after violence in a domestic context is much more difficult, as the women have often chosen to be in the relationship in question. They blame themselves for bad choices and may feel as though they deserved to be abused.

At a point when a woman is either considering leaving, or has recently done so, the role of the professional working with her is exceedingly significant. The worker should be able to recognize signs of this mindset and enable the client to stop blaming herself for the violence. In terms of emotional labor, this means assuming a supportive approach, and carefully hiding any personal feelings or thoughts that question the woman's story. Yancey Martin (2005, 210, 212) notes that rape crisis workers are required to manage their upsetting emotions, often suppressing them with surface acting in order to keep the victims from being harmed.

Workers must also be critically aware of their personal views in terms of relationships and partners' responsibilities. Even professionals might employ discourses related to relationships and love instead of violence, which neglects to consider asymmetrical power hierarchies. Compromises may be seen as women's responsibility. For instance, participation in

sexual intercourse can be considered a norm within a relationship, something that women are obligated to offer to their male partners. Thus, women do not have a right to decline, as it would be seen as rigidity. Normative views of this type disregard women's reasons for not wishing to have intercourse, as well as men's part in the 'power struggle' through control and threats. (Keskinen 2005, 242–244, 274–275.)

Should a worker not be educated on the impact of traumatization on the victim, her story might sound questionable. Due to her trauma, her appearance and behavior may not represent the image of a 'perfect victim'. (Hannus 2011, 205.) Family counseling workers in Keskinen's (2005) research did approach their clients' violence-related psychological issues from the perspective of trauma theory. This both explained the long-term consequences of violence and gave the workers tools for assisting the clients, for example by ensuring that fears would not hold the women back in their everyday lives. They worked together with their clients to plan ways the women could defend their agency and safety in encounters with their abusers, whether or not they were separated. (Ibid. 193–195, 197.)

A young woman described her positive experience with a nurse, specifying that the worker's 'genuine presence' had enabled her to discuss the violence she had encountered. The nurse had not appeared terrified, but instead showed natural empathy and professionalism. (Hannus 2011, 208.) This is a successful example of emotional labor with a female client who has experienced violence. The worker has been able to set aside any personal feelings, displaying only positive concern for, and interest in, the client's well-being. No blame had been placed on the woman – she had simply shared her story in a safe environment. When working with trauma victims, it is important to tailor one's approach to their needs. In the case of violence against women, the constant presence of shame should be countered with warmth, understanding, and knowledge about resources for moving forward. Rothschild (2010, 81) notes that clients often have a need to find an anchor in a stable professional who shows compassion, but does not show signs of anxiety.

2.2.2 Women of Color

There has been criticism towards the mainstream movements of violence against women and domestic violence for neglecting to consider the implications of membership in racial or ethnic minorities, focusing instead on white Western women's experiences of violence (Evans-Campbell et al. 2006; Bent-Goodley 2009; Frias & Angel 2005; Leone et al. 2004; Martin 2007;

Sokoloff & Dupont 2005). The same criticism in many ways applies to the feminist movement in general. Theories developed by white feminists do not necessarily correspond with experiences of women in ethnic minorities – therefore, the language of feminist theory may at times sound foreign to them (Lugones & Spelman 1983, 20). Mohanty (1991, 56) discusses the problematic notion of an "average third world woman" who is seen as a poor, uneducated, tradition-bound victim, while Western women portray themselves as educated, modern, and having the freedom to make their own decisions.

The informants in my thesis research, as well as the populations their workplaces served, had an overwhelming majority of non-white women. Keskinen (2005, 87) remarks that the meanings assigned to violence, the shame attached to it, and the act of making it visible are not the same for all groups. It is therefore necessary to give a voice to minorities for an accurate representation of this diversity. The themes discussed in this section are likely to have a continuous presence in shelter workers' daily reality, especially in workplaces that serve non-mainstream clients – that is to say, minorities. Workers' level of knowledge as well as their personal experiences and thoughts on these topics are bound to differ, and they are likely to need emotional labor to ensure a neutral or sympathetic approach to their client interactions.

Crenshaw (1993) wrote about violence against women of color, pointing out that women of color are marginalized both as women and as non-white. Their experiences of racism differ from those of men of color, and their experiences of sexism do not go hand in hand with those of white women. She argues that race partly explains the suppression of domestic violence as an issue within nonwhite communities; people of color wish to avoid reinforcing distorted public perceptions about them. Women of color might also not call the police because they are frequently hostile. Crenshaw mentions that in the black community, greater concern is given to protecting black men from false rape accusations than supporting black women who are statistically speaking more likely to actually be raped. (Ibid. 1244, 1252, 1256–1257, 1274.)

Unsurprisingly, differences can be found in the rates of violence against women of different racial or ethnic backgrounds. For example, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey from 2010 lists the lifetime prevalence of experiences of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States. The highest prevalence is that of multiracial non-Hispanic women, rising to 54%. Non-Hispanic black women display a rate of 44%, while Hispanic women are at 37% and white women at 35%. (Black et al. 2011, 3, 40.) Evans-Campbell et al. (2006) studied a sample of American Indian and Alaska Native women in New York City, and discovered that the majority of them (65.5%) had experienced at least one form of interpersonal violence in their lifetime. 41% had experienced multiple victimization. The

women reported high rates of depression and dysphoria, especially those who had been sexually assaulted. American Indian and Alaska Native women were likely to seek help after experiencing violence, which signals opportunities for prevention, assessment, and intervention for professionals. (Ibid. 1418–1421.)

Frias and Angel (2005) compared women's risk of partner violence among a sample of low-income African American, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic White women. They found that African American women report the highest rates of victimization, followed by Hispanics. Significant differences emerged among Hispanic subgroups, with Mexican-origin women reporting rates of moderate and severe violence close to those of African American women. In this sample, U.S. citizens reported more abuse than noncitizens. The authors suggested that noncitizens may be unwilling to report abuse for fear of deportation or other legal problems. (Ibid. 552, 556, 561.)

There is often a lengthy history behind marginalization of specific groups. Collins (1993) argues that black women's experiences with slavery in the United States and the European colonization of Africa are tied to the emergence of pornography, which was born in this system of specific social class relationships. Women's race determines the type of objectification they will encounter. Within a routinized system of oppression, violence against black women is often legitimated. They are also less likely to report rape cases, or to seek counseling and other support services. (Ibid. 92–93, 99, 101.) In Warshaw's (1993, 135–136) research, discussed above (2.2), the racial distribution of emergency ward clients was 84.6 percent African American, while none of the physicians shared this ethnic identity. Outsiders do appear to have a tendency to feel uncomfortable when exposed to stories of violence, but nevertheless, it can be asked whether or not this particular systematic ignorance had a racist undertone to it.

Smee (2013) argues that black and minority ethnic women face multiple barriers in seeking for justice. In addition to attitudes and stereotypes associated with violence against women, they must often battle a language barrier, as well as a potential racist response from the criminal justice system and the wider society. Mainstream policies tend to focus on race *or* gender, not their intersections and combined impact. (Ibid. 20, 31.) Privileged groups undoubtedly enjoy substantial advantages compared to minority groups in terms of resources.

Women of color face domestic or other types of violence not only due to their gender and race or ethnicity. Their membership in a racial or ethnic group is often tied to a specific culture, religion, or language, for example. This is most certainly *not* to say that all women belonging to such minorities are abused. Nevertheless, these factors may in part explain the context of violence, the tactics chosen by the perpetrator, and the difficulties in breaking free

from the abuse. According to Siddiqui (2013), cultures of honor believe that the reputation of the family depends on the women: they must conform to traditionally feminine roles of good, obedient wives, daughters, and daughters-in-law, or risk being regarded as 'morally loose'. The community punishes women with violence for bringing 'shame' and 'dishonor' on the family. This is a reason for the women to not seek help, along with lack of knowledge of their rights or where to go for help. Immigrant women might speak poor English and fear for their insecure immigrant status. (Ibid. 171–172.)

For immigrants, the ability to name and disclose experiences of violence may depend on a shortage in something very crucial to communication – language. Pande's (2013) analysis revealed that the Hindi language has a lack of accessible words and shared meanings for rape and child sexual abuse. Words for sexual violence are strongly related to concepts of honor and shame, which has significant implications for how women's experiences are translated. (Ibid. 155.) In addition to language barriers, Pearce & Sokoloff (2013) discuss a host of other issues related to immigrant women's access to services when they have experienced intimate partner violence. They may not be accustomed to calling the police, could be fearful of police brutality, and afraid of the deportation of either themselves or the abuser – the latter could have implications for her immigrant status as well. They feared separation from their children. Living arrangements in extended family households or lack of access to transportation often prevented women from seeking for help. Unfortunately, the absence of a police record means inability to demonstrate a pattern of abuse in court. (Ibid. 796–798, 801–803.)

Domestic violence is often described in terms of an intimate relationship between a man and a woman. However, research on South Asian women's experiences of domestic and sexual violence challenges these dominant assumptions, highlighting the limits of such conceptualizations. South Asian women from various ethnic backgrounds living in the UK described their difficulties in leaving a violent marriage not in terms of romantic love, but limitations placed on them by the wider community. Extended family members were constantly physically present, rendering the women incapable of seeking help or disclosing the violence to a professional. Mothers and mothers-in-law have a significant role in communicating to their daughters and daughters-in-law the norms that legitimize abuse: women should endure the violence 'for the sake of family honor', 'izzat'. Leaving a violent relationship is considered shameful to the family and disrespectful towards the elders. (Ahmed et al. 2008, 45, 47–48, 50–52, 54, 57–61.)

Even after separation, the abuser may continue his violent behaviors. Court dates are opportunities to humiliate women, threats of child abduction are ever-present, and a number

of family members may be involved in post-separation violence. Black and minority ethnic women are especially vulnerable during this period because they might be forced to leave their entire community behind. It can take them years to rebuild their lives. (Thiara 2013, 120–123.) In Arabic-speaking communities, it is difficult to challenge domestic abuse, because men are traditionally expected to control the family, especially his wife and female relatives (Ballela 2013). Outsider intervention is often a complex effort.

State agencies may be reluctant to intervene in violent situations, using 'cultural sensitivity' or 'religious sensitivity' as their excuse (Siddiqui 2013, 172). Thus, political correctness can hinder the victims' process of breaking free from violence. Keskinen (2012) found that Finnish professionals from the police, social services, and non-profits often describe violence in immigrant families in terms of "their culture" and "women's lower status" in it. At the same time, they employed a universal discourse of family violence, referring to similar explanations regardless of the family background. They emphasized general services offered to all people, without the need to tailor their practices to consider factors such as poor language skills or experiences of racism. Being Finnish was depicted as more progressive, and Finnish women were seen as stronger than oppressed immigrant women. (Ibid. 293, 297, 309–311, 319.)

It is highly problematic to assume that the native-born population is not affected by violence – even in the case of a Scandinavian welfare state such as Finland. In fact, an EU wide survey of violence against women revealed that Finland is one of the three countries in Europe with the highest percentage of experiences of physical and/or sexual violence in intimate relationships (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2014, 19). Piispa et al. (2006, 20–21) discovered that 43.5 percent of Finnish women between the ages of 18 and 74 had experienced at least one act or threat of physical or sexual violence after turning 15.

Violence against women and race or ethnicity are both controversial topics, and carry plenty of emotional aspects that complicate discussions around them. Individuals may feel uncomfortable about their personal role in racial discrimination, their non-action in preventing violence, or their inability to support known victims. Thus, many people do not want to acknowledge the existence of either violence or race-related issues. Referring to problems that other (or Other) people have appears to be a commonly used escape, used to justify ignoring violence in one's own, as well as in other communities. Ignorance may be bliss, but unfortunately, it does not erase the reality of violence from our family, community, nation, or the world. While the forms are culture- and context-specific, all women are in danger of experiencing some type of abuse. On a personal level, this Master's thesis is a venue for me to engage in advocacy and activism, and to speak up about this important human rights issue.

3 Research Methods

This Master's thesis research focuses on domestic violence shelter workers' emotional labor[5]. I am interested in discovering what emotional labor means in this context, and how it impacts the workers. As already mentioned in 1.3, my research questions are as follows:

What kind of emotional labor does work at a domestic violence shelter involve?
What type of effects have shelter workers experienced in their private lives due to their work at the shelter?

The first question is the primary one, and the second is closely connected to emotional labor. Qualitative interviews were the most logical means of collecting relevant data. By way of interviewing, I was able to focus on my specific points of interests, and ask clarifying questions as needed. The verbal data produced in interactive situations was rich and descriptive. I find it unlikely that an internet-based survey, for example, could have gathered such versatile responses. The interviews allowed for the interviewees to share their stories and to be heard, which may encourage more expression than simply typing out responses.

During the data collection stage, I was doing an internship at a domestic violence agency, and therefore gained valuable practical experience in the field. This proved to be most useful in establishing trust with my interviewees. I will not utilize my personal experiences as research data, however, I will provide relevant examples at times to support my interpretation of the data based on my work experience. It will thus serve as an additional resource for analysis.

In this chapter, I explain my process of data collection. I give a description of the informants, the interviews, and the data. I reflect on my position as a researcher, discussing my ability to understand the interviewees as well as any hindrances, based on similarities and differences of lived experience and group memberships. The generalizability of my findings is also discussed. In the section on the analysis method, I introduce theoretically informed empirical analysis. I illustrate my use of this method and my analysis process. In addition, I bring forth important points about the impossibility of neutrality in research, disclosing my personal biases and motivation for this research.

[5] Emotional labor is defined in Chapter 2.

3.1 Data Collection

I collected the interview data in the summer of 2014 in an urban city in the United States. At the time, I was doing an internship at a domestic violence agency, and was able to find interviewees through the networks of my supervisor and co-workers. I approached the potential informants with a request to interview and an informed consent form (Attachment 1) via email. In the form, I explained the purpose of my research and expressed my wish to permanently archive the anonymized transcriptions in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD) for scientific research and teaching. Any student, teacher, or researcher wishing to use this data must state the purpose for which they need the data in their application for access and sign an agreement which binds them to specified conditions of use. [6]

Six current or former employees at two different domestic violence shelters agreed to be interviewed for my thesis. I had hoped to reach some more people, however I was unable to do so. The interviewees were all female, their age ranging from mid-twenties to fifties. They all came from immigrant families, but had spent a significant amount of time in the United States and assimilated into the culture. My informants represented several different ethnicities; none of them were white. Their educational backgrounds varied, but most had higher education in relevant fields, such as social work. All of them spoke at least one other language in addition to English, in which the interviews were all conducted. For some English was not the mother tongue.[7]

The interviews took place in either the workplace of the respondent or a public venue, and ranged from 30 minutes to 1 hour and 8 minutes in length. Due to scheduling issues with the first respondent, we only had approximately half an hour to use, which resulted in her responses being shorter and somewhat less detailed than the others'. Three of the interviews lasted about an hour, the last two slightly less. I used a phone as the recorder. Once this research is completed, I will delete all recordings, saving only the transcribed data.

My interviews were thematic, revolving around the topics of everyday work, relationship to clients, ideal workers, and the effects of shelter work (see Attachment 2: Interview Questions). Patton (1990) describes the standardized open-ended interview, which aims at asking each respondent the same exact questions to minimize variation in them, and to ensure that the

[6] See FSD website for more information: http://www.fsd.uta.fi/en/index.html.

[7] For the purpose of protecting the anonymity of the interviewees, I will not provide specific information about their demographic backgrounds. See Personal Data Act (523/1999) for more information about Finnish legislation on protection of privacy.

amount and quality of data collected from each person is systematic. The interview questions are thoughtfully considered in advance. The wording used plays a significant role: open-ended questions should enable the respondent to freely choose what to say, therefore dichotomies cannot count as open-ended. (Ibid. 280–281, 285, 297.) The majority of my interview questions were open-ended, allowing the interviewees to select the topics they considered the most important. In only one case was there a somewhat dichotomous wording, which I attempted to soften as much as possible. ("In your opinion, is it easier or better to identify strongly with a client, or to maintain a boundary to them, or something in between? Please explain.")

The basic structure of the interview questions was mostly followed during all sessions, with flexibility as needed. Due to my limited experience of interviewing prior to this project, having a set list of questions proved to be beneficial. It greatly reduced the stressfulness of the situation for me – knowing that my sheet of paper would assist me in guiding the interview forward. Mason (2002, 75) emphasizes the importance of keeping track of what questions one has already asked, and what the respondent has said. Some of the questions were meant to serve as follow-ups in case I felt that more information was needed. At times the informants responded to both original question and its opposite for comparison right away, in which case I skipped the reversed follow-up questions, or probes for a more detailed response. If they used terms that might not be immediately recognizable to outsiders, or that carried potentially significant implications, I asked for clarifications.

Rastas (2005) remarks that especially in anthropology, a cultural difference between the interviewer and the interviewee is often present. The researcher must overcome language barriers as well as other factors that may complicate the interviewer and interviewee's understanding of each other. Once aware of these differences, a researcher must take into account their lack of knowledge on the cultural background of the interviewee. In her interviews with youth that had experienced racism and their parents, Rastas had been told that her skin color (white) and being a member of only one culture limit her experiences and thus, her ability to understand those of her interviewees. (Ibid. 78, 86, 90.) I am fluent in English, but not a native speaker. However, I have lived, studied, and worked in the United States for longer and shorter periods of time in the last few years, and have no trouble using English as my primary language. Some of the interviewees had thicker accents, which took some time to become accustomed to. Fortunately, the recordings of the interviews were clear and could be rewinded as needed.

Having been born and raised in a Nordic welfare state, in an all-white working middle-class family, I realize that I come from great privilege. I have always had access to free education, which I see as one of the greatest benefits of growing up in Finland. While my

interviewees were well educated, those who had gone to school in the United States must have dealt with tuition fees, which is often a struggle for the family. That was never an issue for me. In addition to this financially carefree educational career, white privilege has definitely been an advantage to me. From this standpoint, it does indeed take an effort to understand the perspectives of my informants, not to mention their racially diverse and generally more disadvantaged client base. I must set aside many assumptions of things I take for granted in order to comprehend where they come from.

Russo (1991) states that in order to build a strong women's movement, white women must accept and analyze their race and class privilege to see how it is connected to the conditions of other women's lives. Racism is not something that only affects other women that need to be helped. It finds its roots in white people and is perpetuated by them. She suggests that instead of guilty, white women should feel outraged about racism. Skin and class privilege cannot always protect from oppression through violence, for example, which enables white women to empathize with women of color. We can choose to be loyal and committed to the survival of all of us. (Ibid. 299–300, 308–310.) Throughout this research project, I have at times experienced great shame due to my privilege. For the most part I have led a comfortable and easy life and had no major barriers to things I have wanted to accomplish. It seems terribly unfair that my thesis, which is based on the stories of women of color, may be regarded valuable due to my academic standing – not because I know from experience what I am writing about. While painful from time to time, this thesis project is an opportunity for me to engage in self-reflection and to reaffirm my pledge of allegiance to a diverse feminist movement.

Unlike casual conversations, a research interview has a specific purpose and roles for the persons taking part in it: while the interviewer often guides the conversation, the interviewee has the information. The interviewer is interested in this information, and will therefore ask questions and encourage the interviewee to respond. The goal of gaining knowledge institutionalizes the situation – the act of recording is a reminder of this. Nevertheless, interviews build on the interaction between the two parties, and all data is verbal material produced within that interaction. (Ruusuvuori & Tiittula 2005, 22–23, 29.)

Miller and Glassner (2004) remark that interviewees will respond to us based on the social categories we belong to, which may become a problem in cases of social distance. The researcher's lack of membership in the social groups being studied may result in mistrust or misunderstanding of questions on the part of interviewees. Similarly, we may not be able to ask the right questions due to our limited understanding of the phenomenon. (Ibid. 127–128.) My role was not only that of a researcher, but also of a student and an intern. This increased the authority

of the professional workers. At the same time, I believe that my position in the field as an intern benefited me greatly, as my informants were aware of our shared work-related experiences. Despite our differences in terms of demographics, my temporary membership in their profession was a great advantage in this front.

Indeed, I believe that my intern status in a domestic violence agency helped me gain the trust of my interviewees rather easily. They also knew that I am working on my Master's Degree in Gender Studies and specializing in violence against women. This allowed us to connect and understand each other through our identification with the same group (Rastas 2005, 87) – as domestic violence workers, as feminists, as activists. It is a tough and mentally demanding field to be in, therefore a feeling of sisterhood can easily develop between fellow workers. For this reason I trust that I received sincere information from my respondents. They were very willing to share their thoughts and experiences, making the tone of the interviews resemble that of an open conversation between friends. The first and the last interview perhaps followed a question–answer pattern more strictly, which shows in the length of the responses: they were distinctly shorter than those of the other four informants.

The role of the interviewer is to ask questions, and to encourage interviewees to continue. The interview consists of much balancing between showing empathy and building shared understandings, and focusing on the task at hand. The methods of demonstrating compassion in informal discussions cannot be used in this context. (Ruusuvuori & Tiittula 2005, 42, 44–45.) Johnson (1983, 210), however, suggests that complicated personal feelings often develop between the researcher and the observed individuals, especially in relations which require trust. In one of my interviews, I slightly stepped over the border of neutral with my suggestion. The respondent was discussing the effects of her work on her private life, and had paused to search for the right words.

Interviewee (3): I'm more aware of patterns of controlling behavior, of someone trying to exert power over you. It's definitely made me more alert, which in a way can be good, but it can also be bad because...

Researcher: Because you can't trust anyone?

I(3): Yeah! So it makes it harder, yeah. You get what I'm trying to say. It makes it harder to build that trust, because you've seen a lot. (laughs)

In this situation, it became apparent that I could relate to her due to my knowledge of violence against women. She seemed very pleased that I had made the revealing comment. My disclosing of this shared experience increased our connectedness. Rastas (2005, 92) notes that same gender or similar age can enable interviewees to disclose very sensitive information. This was true with the exchange above. After the interview, we continued on the topic for a while off the record. It was a unique opportunity to discuss these shared personal impacts of violence work, a theme which has much support from research as well. This identification was a markedly positive experience. However, it could also have been problematic, should the interviewee have felt that she did not need to explain herself so fully later on, as I already understood.

Throughout all six interviews, a dimension of the interaction that is invisible in the transcriptions is my facial expressions and affirmative sounds (*mm-hmm* etc.). Researchers should be careful not to steer interviewees in a certain direction with their responses, but in this context it may have been useful to validate their responses minimally. With nodding, affirmatives, and sympathetic expressions, I was able to convey my compassion and presence to the respondents. Simultaneously, these genuine reactions testified to my ability to understand their perspectives regardless of cultural differences, specifically due to our shared identity as feminist activists.

There is a total of 4 hours and 57 minutes of recordings of the interviews. The transcribed data reaches a total of 73 pages – 32,535 words or 154,243 characters. In my transcriptions of the recorded data, I focused on the content of what was said. It would not have been worthwhile to opt for a very specific depiction of the details of the interviews.[8] I marked emphasis and noticeable breaks in speech. Any filler words such as "like", "you know", and "umm" were overlooked as unnecessary. Some interviewees preferred more informal English, and in these cases I typed up "want to" or "going to" instead of "wanna" or "gonna" in the Word documents. To anonymize any markers of identity, such as ethnicity or geographical clues, as well as to summarize or clarify parts of responses, I used square brackets. The full list of symbols used in the transcriptions is below.

R	Researcher
I(x)	Interviewee (number of interview)
...	Short pause

[8] Conversation analysis employs a very precise method of recording interview data – see e.g. Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998 or Liddicoat 2006.

- -	Part of response cut out
(word)	Unclear word, laughter
underlined	Emphasis on word or sequence
[square brackets]	Transcriber comment, clarification, anonymized item

I have paid special attention to securing the anonymity of my interviewees throughout this research process. Once this work has been graded, I will destroy the interview recordings, saving only the transcriptions. The transcribed data will also be stored in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive for scientific research and teaching.

3.2 Analysis Method

The chosen method for this research is theoretically informed empirical content analysis. Krippendorff (2013) defines content analysis as a 'research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use' (ibid. 24). Texts have meanings relative to particular contexts, discourses, or purposes. The choice of context allows certain kinds of questions to be answered, while others do not make sense. Texts do not have single meanings that could be identified, making other interpretations impossible. The meanings in a text are always brought to it by someone. (Ibid. 24, 28–30.) My way of reading is only one take on the documents, and others would surely present differing analyses of the same contents.

No researcher can ever claim to be unbiased, for it is impossible to step outside one's culture. Consequently, my way of reading the texts reflects the views of the society and those of my discipline, at times even things I wish to criticize. (See e.g. Waller 2005.) I am constantly applying the knowledge I have already gathered in order to understand new information. It is quite possible, if not probable, that I find certain patterns in the data due to my past exposure to such thought patterns, thus discovering exceedingly implicit meanings in a text. My knowledge of violence against women or personal experiences of emotional labor enable me to recognize some things in the data, while hiding other interpretations from view.

Similarly, Mason (2002) agrees that 'a researcher cannot be neutral, or objective, or detached, from the knowledge and evidence they are generating' (ibid. 7). Therefore, it is necessary for researchers using qualitative methods to engage in reflexivity on how their thoughts and decisions shape their research. (Ibid. 5, 7.) Patton (1990) suggests that early childhood socialization, culture, and value systems greatly affect our interpretations of the world.

Researchers should thus report their personal and professional experience, training, and perspectives that may have affected the 'data collection, analysis, and interpretation'. (Ibid. 200, 472. My personal motivation for choosing to specialize in violence against women is seeking justice for loved ones that have been hurt. I am biased to believe all survivor stories, and to relentlessly support them in any way possible. My empathy for survivors has had an impact on my personal life especially in terms of fears for safety, which can be seen in some of my interview questions, as well as my analysis of the responses. Through this research on emotional labor, I wish to prepare myself for a career in advocacy for survivors of violence – an important part of this is the ability to find a balance to avoid burnout.

Prior to starting with the analysis, I looked into the method more closely. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009, 96) explain that theoretically informed empirical analysis uses previous theories to guide the analysis or assist in it. Likewise, in Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) account of qualitative content analysis, a directed approach utilizes existing theory or research to help decide how to begin coding the data. The goal may be to validate or extend the theoretical framework. This approach is somewhat biased in the sense that it may be much easier to find evidence to support a theory rather than to oppose it. (Ibid. 1281, 1283.) Indeed, my analysis did not focus on finding opposites for emotional labor – such a reading of the data would undoubtedly produce completely different results. Instead, I specifically searched for expressions that reflected the perspective of the original theory.

Content analysis has been widely used in research, for example in social work (Bundy-Fazioli et al. 2013) and nursing (Valiee et al. 2014; Vaismoradi et al. 2014; Mazaheri et al. 2013). Yet it was difficult to find information about it as a method. Elo and Kyngäs (2008) note that there has been little discussion in literature, which may be due to criticism that claims content analysis to be an 'overly simple method'. The authors, however, describe it as a flexible method. The researcher must be able to demonstrate their manner of reaching their conclusions in order for others to replicate the findings and confirm their reliability. There is a lack of simple guidelines for data analysis, which complicates the work of researchers using this method. (Ibid. 112–113.) I sought support from general books on qualitative methods to fill this gap. In addition, I took notes of my analysis process to keep track of any decisions I made with the data. These notes enable me to write a detailed description of the progress. Despite the lack of comprehensive literature on the method, the general guidelines were enough to give me a direction.

According to Mason (2002), the primary data sources of interpretivist approaches are 'people, and their interpretations, perceptions, meanings and understandings' (ibid. 56). In an interpretive reading, the researcher must 'read through or beyond the data', constructing an idea

of its meaning. Arguments to support the interpretation should show that it is reasonable, nuanced, and valid. (Ibid. 56, 149, 176.) The method of open-ended interviewing gives access to the perspective of the interviewee, and thus, information which is not directly observable. By using a recorder, the interviewer can focus their attention on the interviewee, as well as ensure the accuracy of data collection. (Patton 1990, 278, 348.)

Interviews allow me to gain entry into the perceptions my interviewees have on emotional labor in the context of domestic violence shelters. With the help of theoretically informed empirical analysis, I am able to identify relevant content from the transcribed data and concentrate on the core of the phenomenon at hand. Using this flexible method, my analysis finds a direction, while not being strictly bound by it. The element of surprise is present, as my findings may differ from the original theoretical outcomes. At the very least, my research can provide knowledge of a context-specific form of emotional labor – this alone answers my main research question. Overall, there is a practical and functional balance between the data, method, theory, and research questions.

The object of my interest is the emotional labor done by domestic violence shelter workers. To identify responses or sections that contained relevant information, I re-read through the transcribed interviews, making highlights based on the theoretical definitions of Hochschild (1979, 1983) and James (1989).[9] While Hochschild is undoubtedly a classic theorist of emotional labor, I felt that James' definition added more depth to the level of connecting with the client. Much material on "reading" the clients would have been left out of the analysis without this addition. As for previous research results on emotional labor, I did not utilize those as guidelines in my initial search for expressions of emotional labor. However, I do use some relevant academic findings as support for my interpretations of the data in the analysis section.

I(2): [S]ometimes when you just <u>really</u> understand their pain, you just want to be there crying <u>with</u> them, and you're like, no, you can't <u>do</u> that, I'm supposed to be here for <u>them</u>. So you really have to kind of step back a little, knowing what it is that they're going through, just trying to figure out the right words to use, trying to be there for them.

In the above excerpt, the shelter worker describes her wish to express her personal feelings in regard to the story of her client, and the conflicting reality of work duties. For the purpose of regaining her professional role, she consciously "stepped back a little" to be able to control her emotions and provide support to the client. This was thus interpreted as emotional labor.

[9] See 2.1 for more details.

I(4): When women were in crisis, it was a lot of nurturing them and reminding them why they were there. They continued to have that fear [of the perpetrator] even though they were far from their home. It's a lot of trying to calm them down and bring them back to that zen, that space where it is okay.

This interviewee was aware of her clients' fearful reactions, and tailored her responses accordingly. In moments of crisis, of emotional turmoil, what the clients needed was for the worker to "calm them down and bring them back to that zen". It is to be expected that calming someone down requires a reassuring approach, combined with a soothing tone. This is also an example of emotional labor.

I(1): We never ask them to tell us their story when they first arrive because, first of all, they've already kind of been through it on the hotline call. And we want to be real careful and not pulling too much out of the client, we don't want to overwhelm this client.

As a final example, this respondent makes a comment on the necessity of sensitivity with new clients. Upon arrival at the shelter, the woman is likely to be in a very vulnerable state of mind. The worker must be careful not to ask for too much information right away: reliving the abuse through sharing the story could be unbearably stressful.

I highlighted full responses as much as possible, only skipping parts that were clearly not related to emotional labor. My aim was to be very inclusive: a sentence at the end of a response may have explained several less obvious sentences directly before from an emotional labor perspective. I included references to boundaries and protecting the self in the highlights, as well as clues of organizational expectations for how the worker is expected to make the client feel through her work efforts. At this point of reading the data, my selections partially reflected things I had learned during my internship. I had interacted with clients myself, as well as observed my co-workers' client sessions. In addition to this practical knowledge, written and spoken accounts of interactions gave me 'insider' access to the profession. As I looked for expressions of emotional labor, I was able to read beyond the surface level of transcribed responses, knowing from experience what "stepping back" or "calming down" a client means in practice. They often require some strategic moves, facial expressions, tones of voice, or careful word selections from the worker.

According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009), the initial phase of the analysis process consists of deciding the topic of interest, marking and separating related sections in the data, and leaving out the rest. The marked data should be stored together and separate from the rest of the data. This material should then be divided into categories or themes. Thematizing helps to group the qualitative data into different topics. (Ibid. 92–93.) Much in this manner, I proceeded to create files with only expressions of emotional labor for each full interview. I then read through this highlighted data and started to look for common themes. Having become quite familiar with the texts as a whole, I chose some responses that revolved around central themes, and established them as the starting points to collect the reoccurring ideas together.

I created new files for five themes and copied full highlighted responses into them. After the first round, there were several uncategorized ones left. Therefore, I made some changes to the titles of the themes to make them more inclusive, as well as added a sixth category. I was able to move all previously uncategorized responses under thematic files. Many responses had elements of two or even three different themes, therefore I placed them under all appropriate ones. As Eskola (2001, 144) notes, at this point there are no significant cuts made, the data is simply re-arranged.

As I focused my attention solely on a specific theme – that of understanding the client's trauma and cultural background and remaining patient – a logic for emotional labor began to emerge. I deduced that knowledge of the institutional setting and the expectations placed on shelter workers guides their actions at work: they must know what outcomes they are expected to create in the client before they can engage in emotional labor. They must also tailor their expressions and interactions to fit the client's trauma reactions and general background. With this basic idea, I organized responses under each theme, starting my analysis with institutional or organizational expectations. This was followed by a more thorough examination of the references to trauma and culture.

Building on the aforementioned ideas, I searched for concrete ways of engaging in emotional labor. At this point I abandoned the previous categories I had established, combining responses from several of them. Unsurprisingly, I found that different situations call for different approaches to emotional labor. There was a distinct gap between what the worker would ideally consider in their interactions with clients, and the reality of what they were able to do at once. Finally, I looked into my second research question, on the effects of shelter work. I concentrated on figuring out why emotional labor can have such a profound impact on the worker. In the context of domestic violence, and more broadly violence against women, the consequences can be both negative and positive. Again, I referred to other research to strengthen my arguments.

In his book on qualitative methods, Alasuutari (1999) says that an interpretation of the meaning of a phenomenon is made based on clues drawn from the research data. In addition, it is conventional to refer to statistics, other research, and theoretical literature. This not only solidifies the interpretation as reasonable, but also provides evidence that it is somewhat generalizable. (Ibid. 44, 47–48, 245.) While it is practical to utilize other academics' work as a reference point when reading the materials, especially in theoretically informed empirical analysis, it should not limit the researcher's thoughts excessively. Gordon (2005) discusses research ethics, noting that transparency is integral to it. The researcher may have to challenge his or her beliefs and find new ways to understand and conceptualize different phenomena. The ability to cope with uncertainty enables the researcher to assume new points of view and to discover unique perspectives. (Ibid. 247.)

I(2): [I]t's the whole empowering thing, we can't tell them what to do, we can only give them suggestions. So I think in the back of your head you kind of hope for the best for them, and you try to guide them... but, again, the decision is theirs so you have to just respect that and give them the space.

This excerpt offers an example of a normative undercurrent in the respondent's speech. Alasuutari (1999) defines normative concepts as ideas of how certain things should be done. They may manifest as moral judgments of others, being ashamed of one's actions, or defending them. It is good to ask why normative principles have such a high moral status. In sociology, a phenomenon is made understandable by explaining the societal and cultural contexts that regulate people's behavior. (Ibid. 224–225, 240.) In this case, the standpoint of the domestic violence movement and the training all workers must undergo could partly explain the mindset seen above. The act of empowering victims of violence is central to all domestic violence work, and an important part of this is supporting their freedom to choose for themselves (see e.g. Campbell 1998). These principles were indeed well-represented in the research data.

Throughout this method chapter as well as my analysis, it is my attempt to represent the six interviewees' voices evenly. However, the second (2), third (3), and fourth (4) interviews were significantly longer than the other three (1, 5 and 6), which explains for their slightly greater number of appearances. The length varied from approximately 3,400 words (1 and 6) to 9,000 words (2). With more material to work on, it is logical that the lengthier interviews contain more information on emotional labor as well.

4 Emotional Labor of Domestic Violence Shelter Workers

In this chapter, I analyze the interview data from the point of view of my research questions. The majority of the discussion revolves around ways of doing emotional labor in domestic violence shelters. First, I look into the organizational context in which this work is done, highlighting the expectations the workers must conform to. This is followed by a consideration of factors related to the clients' trauma and cultural background. Professionals must be mindful of a variety of matters that help them define what type of emotional labor is needed at any given time. The act of hiding or suppressing different emotions appears to be the most common form, and the ability to maintain professional boundaries is central in this. Finally, I discuss some effects shelter work has had on the interviewees, both in positive and negative ways.

4.1 Norms and Expectations of the Organization

Emotional labor at a domestic violence shelter can take a multitude of forms. Before engaging in actual emotional labor, shelter workers must have an idea of what is expected of them. During the interviews, I asked my informants to discuss their personal views on ideal or professional workers, as well as things they would consider unprofessional. These responses give insight into some general norms of the organizations they work for. What are the goals in terms of client outcomes? What type of feelings are the workers expected to create in their clients, and how does that relate to emotional labor?

According to the interview data, shelter workers give their clients information about domestic violence, with the aim of helping them understand that they are not alone with their experiences. Clients may share stories the worker finds shocking or does not agree with, but it is essential to remain "very non-judgmental" nevertheless. Support, empathy, and resources must be extended to people the worker might have nothing in common with. Staff members cannot be ignorant about the shelter residents' culture, religion, or traditions, and should never force their own beliefs or values upon clients.

Many respondents mentioned struggles related to maintaining structure and reinforcing shelter rules. While they recognize the significance of order and safety, they feel that their role as the "bad guy always monitoring everything" may have negative effects on their relationship to clients.

I(2): As much as you want to advocate for them and be nice to them and help them in any way, they also need to understand that because it's a communal living that there are rules, that they cannot be disrespecting other members or residents of the shelter. So if they are disobeying rules, we have to be strict with them. And it's kind of hard to maintain that balance at times because you don't want them to see you as the enemy.

At the other end of the spectrum, interviewees agree that being overly casual will not lead to the best results, either. While being strict can "take its toll on" on the worker, their casual behaviors (such as "very loose talks") may make it more difficult to enforce the rules, if taken too far. Straying away from the professional role could also prevent the clients from discussing heavier topics.

I(4): They need someone to provide them with encouragement and support. When your role is taken too casually, you lose some of that, you take that away from the women. You take away their ability to come to you, and talk about something difficult, because you're too casual. It's knowing how to communicate. Being a combination of things, but not too casual.

As domestic violence professionals, the workers must also be aware of how their behavior at the shelter may remind clients of the abuse they have experienced. They may be "kicked out of the program" if they do not abide by the rules, and threats like these may feel like a continuation of the cycle of abuse. Instead of extreme strictness, the workers should therefore focus on creating a safe, positive environment where the clients can feel at home. Especially the children of clients are thought to benefit from the absence of worries or fears.

According to the interviewees, a necessary quality or characteristic of a shelter worker is willingness to learn. While they may have relevant degrees or extensive work experience in the field of domestic violence, it is important to be humble. The clients have knowledge and experience that is unique. Workers should thus avoid adopting an expert position, and instead demonstrate that they wish to receive new information and learn from it.

The respondents agree that empathy has a significant role in work with clients. They warn against becoming too emotionally invested, however. Not only does connecting with clients make the work "personal", but it may also reduce the worker's ability to provide services. Self-control is required in situations where the worker is overcome with emotions and must set them aside. This is a prime example of emotional labor in the form of suppressing feelings (Hochschild 1983, 7).

I(2): [S]ometimes when you just really understand their pain, you just want to be there crying with them, and you're like, no, you can't do that, I'm supposed to be here for them. So you really have to kind of step back a little, knowing what it is that they're going through, just trying to figure out the right words to use, trying to be there for them.

One interviewee describes her ideal of finding "a fine line in between" connecting with clients and "laying down the rules of the shelter". In her opinion, not identifying with clients could easily make a worker detached and numb, and their job "monotonous". By being invested in the clients' lives, she can provide them with more services. Another respondent feels that a worker must be careful not to "go overboard", as that would not allow her to be "the best case manager". It was also mentioned that someone with recent experiences of violence might be easily triggered at the shelter if they had not "gone through that healing" yet. This could be interpreted as potential for identifying or empathizing with clients too strongly, to the point where work becomes difficult.

Some informants talk about times when they had an urge to protect clients, "fix" things for them, or guide them back to "the right path". There appears to be an underlying assumption that the workers have an understanding of which choices would be in the best interest of clients. Based on my personal experience as an intern at a domestic violence agency, the most recommended option was to leave the abuser for good and start a new life. Nevertheless, the interviewees acknowledge that they can "only give them suggestions", and in the end, "the decision is theirs so you have to just respect that". Similarly, Powell-Williams et al. (2013) found that victim advocates manage their emotions by altering their expectations of themselves and victims, often going from wanting to 'save' women to accepting their choices. They often redefine themselves as 'option givers' rather than 'saviors'. This act of developing a 'thick skin' enables them to become less vulnerable emotionally and to avoid potential burnout. (Ibid. 267–268, 270.) It could indeed be very disappointing to watch a client return to her abuser.

An important theme in terms of what the organization expects from shelter workers is that of empowering[10] clients. While they may wish to see certain decisions take place, it is crucial that the women are not pushed into agreement. They must be able to survive on their own after leaving the shelter. Half of the interviewees specifically use the term "empowerment", and the others refer to positive "change" or "progress", "independence", "living independently", or having "a success story". I have interpreted these similarities as a part of the concept of

[10] Oxford dictionary definition of 'empower': Make (someone) stronger and more confident, especially in controlling their life and claiming their rights.

empowerment. Based on the respondents' accounts of what they wish to accomplish with their work, it is arguably the main end goal.

I(3): If I do it for them now... in four months, they don't have me. Am I going to empower them enough that they can keep doing this for themselves even after they leave?

I(2): [N]one of that really works if they don't get that sense of confidence. I can help them get a job, help them connect with people who will help them with housing, let's say they leave the shelter... - - If they're not equipped with the skills to [cope with suicidal thoughts or unhappiness], and we don't teach that, then I don't feel like we're successful.

Indeed, the interviewees hope to see their clients leave the shelter with a new sense of independence. The women would have faith in their ability to survive on their own, and be able to build a community around people who care about them. They might have a job or go to school. In addition, the workers hope to break the pattern of cross-generational violence, so that any children involved will not become abusers or experience abuse in their relationships. Remembering these end goals for client work may help workers stay motivated amidst their daily frustrations. Emotional labor is needed for the purpose of being able to empower the clients, and should everything work out well, to see a concrete change in their lives.

4.2 Trauma-informed, Culturally Sensitive, and Patient Service Providers

The informants agree on the importance of empathy in client work. In their speech, empathy is strongly connected to understanding the effects of domestic violence trauma, specifically in terms of psychological harm. Cerulli et al. (2012) catalogued some effects in focus groups of female victims. They found that even after the perpetrator had been criminally prosecuted, the women continued to suffer from symptoms like depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and flashbacks. Fear was constantly present in their lives. Memories of abuse were often triggered by feelings of pain in the body, retraumatizing the victim and making their daily lives frustratingly difficult. (Ibid. 777–778.) Accordingly, several interviewees make references to recognizing depression in clients, and how it explains their potentially problematic behavior.

I(3): Am I saying that they did not do it because they're lazy, are they not doing it because they don't want to help themselves, or am I able to say, you know what, this person might be

depressed. This is a very difficult situation, maybe they feel scared. Maybe they've tried before, and it hasn't worked out for them. Without empathy, all you are is that push, you're almost just pushing someone, and I think you can push people to the point of breaking.

Instead of "pushing" the clients, it is suggested that workers should "empathize with how they're feeling" based on their personal experiences of depression or hopelessness. This could be particularly useful if the client in question comes from a dramatically different social environment, as it may be difficult for the worker to understand their life experiences and thus, their general orientation to life. While the staff member might not understand "what their cultural perspective means to them", a shared understanding of negative feelings could be of assistance in helping the clients overcome their struggles.

I(4): I took it upon myself to try as much as possible to put myself in their shoes and realize how any one situation could feel to them, and then do everything possible to make them feel better about it.

Kosny and MacEachen (2010) discuss the exhausting nature of empathy work, which not only requires working overtime and without pay at times, but also necessitates a great deal of emotional engagement. Workers may engage in constant appraisal, concern and management of client emotions and state of mind even when they are not in direct contact with the client. This type of work is often not visible as it partly takes place in workers' minds. (Ibid. 368–369.) It would seem obvious that such engagement in others' lives is particularly draining.

While many of the interviewees discuss their clients' different reactions to trauma, one names this approach specifically as being trauma-informed. She describes it as understanding "some of the symptoms of trauma, the common results of trauma", and thus, understanding "why the client is acting the way they are". Her clients can show their emotions by being "very emotional", "aggressive", or "withdrawn". This is because "different people have different coping mechanisms". Another interviewee notes that within the immigrant population, clients tend to be quiet about their trauma and unwilling to share their experiences – "almost like they feel embarrassed about it". There are individual differences in reactive patterns, and at times clients may seem to prefer a certain type of response. However, any little stimulus could interfere with such habits, rendering previous predictability non-existent.

A good shelter worker must have "compassion, empathy, and patience". When it comes to changes in the clients' lives, "it takes a while for things to move". Domestic violence is

not easy to recover from. Therefore, workers should remain patient even when they wish changes were easier to see.

I(6): [D]ifferent people have a different way of progressing, and some people may not progress at all, and it's okay. Trauma has different effects in different people and for some people, it takes them a long time to progress.

In times of conflict, clients' reactions may seem out of proportion – sometimes "they would just turn around and snap". It is especially in these moments that workers must remind themselves of what is behind this aggression. "It's not so much what I did, it's what it reminded her of." Dramatic outbursts should thus not be taken personally. Having been through abuse might show as irritation at the smallest things, and unfortunately, it is impossible for the worker to anticipate what could trigger memories in a certain client. Their strong reactions to seemingly harmless occurrences become understandable when viewed in the context of domestic violence experiences.

I(4): I think all too much, and all too often, you forget everything that's going on with them. The simple fact that they left their home, they left everything they knew, to go into the complete and utter unknown, [which] is scary. It was a constant reminder to all of us [workers], that we would check that we were remembering what brought these ladies there, and that we were staying considerate to that.

As much as the necessity of being understanding is brought up, and clients should feel in control of their lives, there are rules aimed at maintaining order and safety at the shelter. The women cannot be continuously excused from bad behavior based on their traumatic past.

I(5): I try to be very... empathetic and put myself in their shoes, because I know that what they had to go through is very difficult. But I think also, I'm pretty straight up with them. Yes, I understand that you've had a lot of challenges, a lot of struggles and you had to leave so much behind you. - - I understand, but I also try to put limits. That's not my fault. So let's work it out, because we're trying to create a safe environment.

The interviewees came from diverse backgrounds, and the shelters they worked at for the most part provide services to non-white communities. Therefore, the data at hand represents a

somewhat more diverse sample of domestic violence than much of the global movement, which has been criticized for leaving out marginalized communities (Martin 2005; Sokoloff & Dupont 2005). During the interviews, all respondents brought forth points about being sensitive to the clients' cultural background. Some of them had personal experience from growing up in a "culture where you're constantly forced to be with someone else, or get married, because that's just what the culture tells you", and women do not have many other options. They were critical of these types of ideas and wished to help their clients challenge that mindset.

I(1): With my clients specifically, they're [ethnicity] [religion]. In the [ethnicity] culture, and the [religion] culture, it's not to speak for everyone, but [in] a community that I came from, and some of the clients come from, a woman is not to leave her home, leave and go live somewhere else. And in our community, it's looked down upon to leave the man.

Awareness of cultural values such as the ones described above may provide an explanation for some women's struggles to break free from an abusive relationship. Without this knowledge, workers can easily become frustrated as their arguments for starting an independent life are not embraced with open arms. As one interviewee phrased it, it is "hard to ingrain this whole independence and empowerment in them when that's not how they grew up". It seems evident that coming from a very different background may complicate efforts to understand this mentality, at least to some extent. A respondent briefly discussed her "cultural sensitivity studying", which helped her connect with women of a different nationality more easily. Another described her habit of finding information about new clients' cultures online, which had been helpful. Yet another felt that her knowledge of the cycle of violence and its effects enables her to do her job despite cultural differences or language barriers.

Conversely, should the worker share significant demographic or other characteristics with a client, they might be more attuned to the latter's state of mind. Coming from a similar background may enable them to connect with a client easily – "you can relate to them". This can help them to individualize the services they provide to the client, especially in terms of knowing which arguments they might find more compelling than others. While connections like this can be useful, they might have an unpleasant impact on relationships to other clients, as mentioned in the next excerpt.

I(4): With the [ethnicity], it was a lot about the culture. I know their culture, I know what they mean, I know their manners, I understand, I live that. We connected more in that sense. - - I think

sometimes that was unfortunate, because other clients felt disadvantaged and felt like they weren't being treated the same way.

Regardless of the backgrounds of both worker and client, staff members must be able to set aside their "pre-conceived notions about different cultures" and "individualize that person". Interestingly enough, the same interviewee later explains that because of her work, she now sees "things more in terms of systems" – not simply an "individual woman that just came in and is going through abuse". She makes references to missing opportunities and resources, as well as social constructs of gender, which have all contributed to making the abuse possible. These conflicts within the data reveal the fluid nature of approaches to clients. While recognizing systematic patterns of disadvantage can be useful on a general level, in terms of providing services, it might be more appropriate to acknowledge the unique situation of each person.

4.3 Emotional Labor in Practice: Managing Emotions

As I have established in the previous sections, domestic violence shelter workers must be highly aware of several intersecting factors in their clients' lives. They have experienced different types of violence, and each of them has their own way of reacting to this trauma. Their membership in various groups based on demographic characteristics (race/ethnicity, social class, religion, nationality) may partly explain the context-specific violence they have experienced as well as how it affects them. For example, cultures of honor[11] have strict ideas of a woman's role, and these ideas both perpetuate the violence and prevent women from speaking up and seeking help. Workers should be knowledgeable about and understanding of factors that may hinder the change they would like to see in their clients. A solution that seems obvious to the worker may be quite challenging for the client.

The goal of shelter work is to empower the clients and to enable them to survive on their own after the violence. The same approach for communicating these ideas will undoubtedly not work for all clients, as there are vast differences between women. Taking into account an individual woman's background, as described above, the worker can tailor her assistance to fit the needs of this particular person. Of course, being able to balance out all this information and to choose a suitable approach amidst other work duties is quite an expectation for workers. This may be an ideal model, but difficult to accomplish in practice. Workdays can be

[11] See 2.2.2 for this and other discussions of context-specific forms of violence.

terribly busy and not allow for an intense concentration on an individual client's case. Indeed, a full immersion into any particular woman's perspective would most likely require a lengthy therapeutic process. While shelter workers are often expected to provide counseling among other things, they cannot offer the same kind of services as a licensed psychologist or a therapist, for example. They must find a balance between the most desirable results and what is possible for them to accomplish given their abilities and training.

If the ideal cannot be lived up to so easily, what would be realistic? Based on the interview data, it would appear that shelter workers are indeed conscious of the complexity of each client situation, but must attempt to simplify their efforts to help due to lack of resources. Generally speaking, leaving the abuser and becoming independent would seem to be the ideal outcome for clients. Unfortunately, this does not always happen. In such cases the workers do their best to reign in their personal opinions and strong reactions; this is where emotional labor comes into play.

I(1): Every social worker wants a success story, so negative parts, it's when you're working so hard for a client, and then she returns to her abuser. Or you're working so hard for a client and she decides to make a decision that you necessarily don't agree with. But you have to keep your composure, keep in the back of your mind that that's her decision, not mine.

By "keep your composure", the interviewee seems to imply that she must hide her feelings of frustration in order to appear supportive in front of her client. This is a reoccurring theme for one respondent in particular. She makes several references to feeling angry at women "who let men control their life". At the same time, she is familiar with the effects of some women's cultural background on their world view. Nevertheless, she has conflicting emotions on the subject.

I(2): I don't know if it's almost like me <u>blaming</u> women, but I can't, because it's more the culture, but there's a part of me that feels that I don't understand why these ladies don't understand how important it is to be able to do things on your own and be successful on your own.

This interviewee comes from a similar culture as many of her clients. However, she reflects on growing up in "a family where it is <u>encouraged</u> to be independent". For her, independence is a priority, and she struggles with understanding why her clients cannot adopt this mindset right away. She alternates between talking about clients and criticizing their culture, although all respondents agree that great sensitivity is necessary with the topic. The impact of American

individualism [12] can be seen here in how independence is seen as more valuable than dependence. Another conflict that is revealed through this frustration is the call for patience in client work as the ideal, and the reality of impatience when the clients do not progress as fast as the worker would hope them to. She refers to "stepping back" and accepting the client's decision as her ways of dealing with these conflicts, and more than anything, to "being patient" even when it is difficult.

Some respondents also mention their disbelief at women who have children, but are unable to move forward or take action one way or another. There is a moral judgment at not prioritizing the children's well-being. Hiitola (2015) notes that mothers are often blamed for failing to protect their children from the harm of witnessing the abuse of their mother by their father. The violent father is defined in terms of problematic manhood, while the mother is responsible for the children and thus, a bad mother. (145)

I(3): I'm not going to lie, there <u>are</u> times when there are frustrations... like, I know that you're going through stuff, but think about what the children are going through.

I(5): [If] two years later, the same woman [comes back] and needs assistance, that's just like, <u>ahh</u>, but we <u>talked</u> about this! - - That's when it's hard for me to have more empathy and understand. Just do it, your kids are in the middle of this.

These responses can be interpreted in two ways. First, the children's well-being[13] should be the most important concern for the woman, and a powerful incentive to leave the abusive relationship. Second, even if the woman cannot make the decision of leaving for her own sake, she should do it for the sake of her children. These two are somewhat intertwined, and both perspectives appear to place more value on the children than the woman. It is unclear whether or not any hints of this idea would be directly communicated with the client. However, when these thoughts surface, it would most likely lead to attempts at hiding the frustration, or risking failure to remain supportive, which is required from professionals.[14]

[12] See e.g. Wu & Keysar (2007) or Rothwell (2010).

[13] For discussions about the impact of witnessing domestic violence during childhood, see e.g. Blair et al. (2015); Meltzer et al. (2009); O'Brien et al. (2013); Stern (2014).

[14] In the above excerpts, the context of these statements led me to believe that despite the use of the pronoun 'you', the interviewees would not direct such straightforward criticism at their clients in person. Instead, the interview was an opportunity for them to express work-related frustrations without offending anyone.

The workers do not have the opportunity to hold violent men accountable for their actions, and therefore, all responsibility for changing for the better falls on the traumatized woman. Considering the vulnerable state she is likely to be in, this is a lot to ask. Nevertheless, it has been found that abused women typically strive to be 'good mothers', using resourceful and creative ways to protect their children and respond to their needs, although domestic violence significantly complicates their mothering (Lapierre 2010). Women might approach mothering as if they were not abused, but a normal, happy mother; they might hide the violence to pretend that the children's father figure is a positive one; or by avoiding discussion of the violence with the children (Peled & Gil 2011, 465–468).

Boeckel et al. (2014) discovered that women's mental health status is connected to their protective behaviors when their violent partners are a threat to their children. If the women's levels of depression and PTSD were severe, they were less protective of their children. Their parenting styles were also more dysfunctional. (Ibid. 1223.) Against this background, and knowing what negative impacts there are for children witnessing domestic violence, it may be easier for shelter workers to speak their minds when children are involved. They could feel more entitled to cross the line from supportive to taking a moral stand, especially when it comes to leaving an abusive relationship. This exception to the rule of non-judgment may be deemed acceptable here.

In the situations described in this section, emotional labor and related emotion management has for the most part focused on suppressing or hiding frustration. It is quite probable that this is accomplished through surface acting in practice. Shelter workers' professionalism builds on their ability to assist their clients with whatever is asked of them, regardless of their personal stance on the matter at hand. Should they disapprove of or disagree with a client's decision, they cannot express this, at least not directly. They know that while the client was being abused, her ability to make her own decisions was severely limited. Her time at the shelter allows her to gain back control over her life.

To protect this chance to learn independence, the workers must engage in emotional labor, with surface acting as their easiest immediate option. By carefully controlled facial expressions, gestures, tones, and posture, they can convey a more neutral stand than the one they have in reality. While the interviewees do not discuss the specifics of how this happens, their word selections (such as "keep your composure") suggest that they attempt to disguise their true feelings. Without consulting the clients themselves it is impossible to tell whether or not they are successful at this. As the next comment illustrates, there is always a chance they might fail.

I(2): Is there going to be a situation where I feel like someone is making the wrong decision and I'm going to burst and be angry? There might be, there might be (laughs). It hasn't happened yet.

Another type of need for emotional labor is presented when the worker has a deeper connection with a client and is affected by her story. This can happen for a multitude of reasons. In the words of one of the respondents: "It's impossible not to get attached to people who are amazing survivors". She also notes that becoming attached to clients makes the work more personal and thus harder. Another interviewee discusses her connections with young clients, who were about the same age as her sisters.

I(3): [T]he clients I got to meet the most were really young clients, eighteen, twenty-something. I think a lot of that has to do with having sisters that age. - - I think with those clients it was hard for me to not feel like I need to rescue or protect. They are so young, I can't believe they're already experiencing all of this. There's this part of me that just wants to protect them. So they were the easiest to connect with.

In this case, it is probable that the line between a professional worker and a private person became blurred. The young girls reminded the informant of her own sisters, which lead to a strong need to protect them. This may have stemmed from a wish to keep any loved ones out of harm's way, even symbolically by extending the protection to people similar to them. There are many ways in which clients can bear resemblance to people that are important to the worker – or even remind them of their own vulnerability.

I(4): There was one woman who came in, and her birthday was a day before mine, and she had a little girl. She grew up in an area I had lived in before. So it was like a slap in the face. This could be anybody. We know that. We forget that, we look past it. This could be anybody. No one asks for this, this happens. In that case, there was a lot of demographic things that led to identifying with her, but there were people that were older than her. A lot of times I would see someone and I would think about my mom, or I would think about my best friend about the stories that I would hear.

Identifying strongly with a client may result in emotional turmoil as the reality of violence comes close to the worker. Especially the stories of women that remind them of themselves or loved ones can be disturbing, potentially resulting in deep self-reflection and causing personal distress.

Someone they care about could easily become a victim of violence, or the worker could experience violence in her personal life.[15] This realization may come and go at any time, or it may have a continuous presence at the workplace. In either case, it could potentially have a negative impact on the worker.

In a situation where these types of fears for safety arise, the worker might become overwhelmingly involved in the story at hand. As one interviewee (3) described above, some young girls' resemblance to her sisters awoke a strong need to protect in her. Regular assistance was not enough; she would have preferred to "rescue" these clients. A professional should refrain from bringing their personal self into client interactions. Knowing this, one might strive to consciously shift their worry from their own life to that of the client – the latter being acceptable in the context of work. Thus, the emotional labor being performed could be the act of transferring the appropriate feeling of worry from oneself or loved ones to the client. The presence of the private dimension might lead to overcompensating in the form of extra efforts being directed at solving the situation; by "saving" a client, the worker can feel as if she is also protecting herself and others close to her. This is closer to deep acting, but instead of summoning feelings, the worker would redirect existing ones.

In their research on the impact of working with abused women on female social work students, Goldblatt and Buchbinder (2003) similarly noted that the lines between private and professional domains become blurred, causing distress and concern for one's safety in the students. Work with abused women may also result in a change to meanings being attributed to past and present intimate relationships, as well as self-reflection and change of power relations with intimate partners. An empathic intervention with battered women requires clear boundaries between the student and the client. This enables the student to be a professional in the shelter as well as continue her daily activities without being controlled by the reality of violence. (Ibid. 261–269.)

This research suggests that violence advocacy may lead to significant changes in self-image and intimate relationships. The stress can, however, be dealt with by establishing a boundary between the self and the client. Indeed, similar comments can be found in my research data. When asked if they thought it would be better to identify strongly with a client or to maintain a boundary to them, many respondents preferred something in between. They feel that it

[15] One of the interviewees disclosed having personal experience of a past abusive relationship, while the rest either specified not having any such experience or did not make any references to the topic.

is possible to have a connection with a client without compromising their authority or professional identity.

I(5): I call the ladies I work with by their names. Most people call them the client, because for them, that is to keep the boundary. I don't see it that way. This person has a name. I can be compassionate and treat that person as a human being. Not my client number one two three. I think you can still have that connection and also be separated.

In order for the client to be able to discuss her experiences with a professional, the latter must keep her feelings in check, especially when it comes to highly intense stories of violence.

I(3): You don't ever want to make a client feel like what they're sharing with you is too much for you, because then they'll feel bad. If [you] can't handle it, they can't tell you stuff. I think that's a hard balance to find, really showing empathy and engaging them and putting yourself in their shoes, while being able to have that boundary.

While it is necessary to understand the client's history of violence and current emotional state, the worker should not allow herself to become too emotionally involved. Rothschild (2010) remarks that the autonomic nervous system of therapists may be activated simply through discussion with a client. It would thus be practical to be able to recognize changes in it, as well as to choose an appropriate state of arousal. The boundary between a therapist and a client is essential, and can help to maintain control of oneself. The therapist is in need of personal space, and simply paying attention to physical distance can help to establish a professional distance. (Ibid. 95, 118–119.) If understood in this manner, the boundary between the worker and the client can be physical, and as such rather easy to create. Most informants appear to refer to emotional boundaries in the interviews, however.

I(6): I don't think it's healthy to be emotionally involved with clients, because you can get burnout, and get secondary trauma.[16] *- - You can't be 100 percent unemotional. If you're not emotionally engaged, it's hard for you to work with a client, to empathize. And if you're very*

[16] For more information about secondary trauma or vicarious traumatization, see e.g. Baird & Kracen (2006); Bride (2007); Lerias & Byrne (2003). For factors that may protect workers from secondary traumatic stress, see Slattery & Goodman (2009).

emotionally involved, then it's also going to affect you. If you're burned out, you would not be able to assist the clients as much as you should.

This interviewee was specifically focused on maintaining her professional boundaries. She also voiced her opinion against identifying strongly with a client, explaining that she thought it was unhealthy. Overall, her responses were more centered on the theme of separating oneself from the clients, as compared to the other informants. All others expressed more emotional involvement in terms of becoming attached or frustrated. Indeed, her expressions of emotional labor were mostly about awareness and observation of the client's state of mind, with only one mention of frustration at not being able to see the impact of her work on clients' lives. Perhaps this particular informant is for the most part able to avoid the need for emotion management through her concentration on boundaries.

This suggests that boundaries could be a significant tool not only for maintaining a professional distance, but also for controlling the amount of emotional labor that is needed at work in a domestic violence shelter. Boundaries protect the worker from becoming too attached to clients, or help them retreat back to their professional role if such a thing has already occurred. An emotional distance can enable them to feel safe in their personal lives – not in danger of being subjected to violence, because they are not like their clients. In addition, boundaries can be of assistance with hiding or suppressing frustrations as well. Powell-Williams et al. (2013) noticed that victim advocates define themselves as 'option givers' rather than 'saviors', and this 'thick skin' enables them to become less vulnerable emotionally. It is possible that this would make them less affected by perceived failures at work (i.e. inability to help clients the way they would like to). Thus, boundaries could limit the need for hiding inappropriate reactions, whether they are of irritation or self-centered concerns.

I(1): I've learned to draw my boundaries a long time ago, but when you're in the shelter, it's different. You're living with your clients, you're actually here forty hours of your week, living with clients. So it could be difficult to separate that.

Regardless of how well the worker has set up boundaries, it might be difficult to hold on to them, as demonstrated in the above excerpt. It is to be expected that there is fluctuation between different shelter workers in terms of how well they will achieve their goals regarding separation between the self and the client. Should the boundary not hold perfectly, more emotional labor

would likely be needed to ensure the worker's ability to provide services and support to the client without compromising their professionalism.

Again, the end goal is to empower the women, and at times this might require the workers to go out of their way to help. Some client cases may be especially challenging and call for extra efforts. Ideally, the interviewees would hope that a shelter worker is compassionate, caring, able to "deal with all types of personalities", patient, and wants to make a difference. Ashforth and Tomiuk (2000) suggest that internalizing the 'display rules of a specific identity' as a part of the self leads to deep authenticity. The person in question acts the part they identify with regardless of their current feelings, because they 'believe in it'. (Ibid. 194–195.) Should a shelter worker internalize their service role and the characteristics mentioned above, she might not be able to protect the self from exhaustion. Therefore, it is important that workers find ways to guard themselves against compassion fatigue[17] (Harr & Moore 2011; Hunsaker et al. 2015) – in the extreme case, they might risk becoming unable to respond to any client emotions.

4.4 Effects of Emotional Labor

The need for emotional labor in the context of domestic violence shelters places pressures on the workers. In order to ensure an appropriate manner of delivering services to women who have experienced violence, they are expected to control and manage their emotions and expressions. As discussed above, this often entails hiding frustrations or feelings of upset. It naturally follows that there are consequences for the workers – for example, Erickson and Ritter (2001, 156) found that workers who hid their agitation reported higher levels of burnout. In their study of mental health nurses, Mann & Cowburn (2005) discovered a connection between emotional labor and both 'interaction stress' and daily job stress: the more there was of emotional labor, the higher were the reported levels of the other two as well. They noted that surface acting has a significant role in predicting emotional labor, possibly due to its connection to 'detachment from one's own feelings and identity', also known as inauthenticity. (Ibid. 159–160.)

I(2): I find myself getting angry or annoyed that there are ladies out there that feel like that they can't do it on their own or that they're not worthy enough to be able to be on their own. So I would say that probably bothers me.

[17] Oxford dictionary definition of 'compassion fatigue': Indifference to charitable appeals on behalf of suffering people, experienced as a result of the frequency or number of such appeals.

This interviewee has struggled to abstain from voicing her irritation to some clients that she sees as constrained by their culture. By focusing on producing an outwardly patient demeanor through surface acting, she has been able to continue working with these women, but not without a cost. She returns to the theme several times during her interview, which attests to the extent of its influence. While at work, she cannot voice these thoughts – unless she is able to vent with a co-worker – but must instead control her reactions. This could result in a feeling of inauthenticity. It would stand to reason that in her personal life, she would need to express these pent-up frustrations (within the limits of confidentiality). It is noteworthy that she refers to "ladies out there" instead of simply clients. Indeed, witnessing such extreme differences in ideology through her clients may have alerted her to the fact that countless women around the world do not share her ideas of independence and self-worth. These concepts hold much value for her, and it may be quite difficult to accept that others have different priorities.

This interviewee is bothered by the aforementioned mentality outside of work as well, admitting to being annoyed upon encountering such ideas. She would like to be able to tell women that they do not have to go along with what the culture expects them to do (namely, to get married), but has to keep her thoughts to herself in order to remain politically correct. It is no surprise that continuous engagement in emotional labor at the workplace often results in some level of impact on the worker's private life. Respondents describe being unable to stop thinking about what happened at work when they go home, and the need to "decompress" to be able to sleep. This could be partially explained by the high intensity of the job.

I(1): You need to be emotionally engaged, you have to care. This work requires you to care. If you don't care, then nothing is going to move forward.

Shelter workers must invest a great deal of emotion in their job, for it is a demand of their profession. This will undoubtedly affect them on some level. Meyerson (2000) discovered that social workers in one hospital department thought of burnout as 'a normal consequence of their work', even a 'healthy response'. Professional competence built on the use of emotions and empathy at work. This allowed them to connect with clients, as well as led to feeling depleted due to continuous experiencing of bad feelings. (Ibid. 170–171.) In a similar manner, shelter workers are expected to convey their understanding to their clients, building a bond of trust to facilitate successful assistance with various client goals. They should be genuinely interested in the life outcomes of women that are, at first, nothing more than complete strangers to them. It does not seem probable that a warm, personal relationship can be established with every single of them. At

multiple points in this developing client–worker relationship, the latter may have to resort to deep acting to demonstrate an appropriate level of caring. This can be expected to feel rather tiring.

Emotional labor can thus have a deep impact on the worker, especially in a distinct environment such as a domestic violence shelter. They listen to stories of abuse and must convey their empathy. While some of this may fall under surface or deep acting (Hochschild 1983), it seems impossible that they could remain completely intact in the face of such brutality. Emergency nurses that have witnessed the suffering and vulnerability of survivors of intimate partner violence experience emotional distress as a result (van der Wath et al. 2013, 2249), and based on the analysis so far, it seems more than likely that this is the case with most domestic violence shelter workers as well. Given the requirement of empathy in their work context, it would be impossible to avoid all negative consequences.

Gerdes (2011) defines empathy as 'feeling and perceiving the world from the perspective of the other' (ibid. 233). Considering the differences in identity of the empathizer and the other person based on 'socioeconomic status, gender, and ethnicity/race', cognitive perspective-taking skills are needed on the part of the empathizer. By using empathy, the practitioner does not need to assume responsibility for the client's burden – they are thought to be capable of solving their own problems with the help of the information and options provided by the worker. (Ibid. 233, 236–237.) With the diverse client populations, perspective-taking may entail various manners of learning about a specific person's background (described in more detail in 4.2).

There is a clear consensus on the importance of the role of empathy among the interviewees. In their speech, empathy means the ability to put oneself in another person's position, and to understand where they are coming from. It allows the worker to help the client more easily and to be more efficient in their job. Without it, work can be quite challenging: "If you're not able to empathize or to see from the client's point of view, it would be very hard for anyone to assist a client." Respondents emphasize the necessity of remembering that the clients "left their home, they left everything they knew, to go into the complete and utter unknown".

I(4): I took it upon myself to try as much as possible to put myself in their shoes and realize how any one situation could feel to them, and then do everything possible to make them feel better about it.

This strategy can be very useful in increasing empathy. However, it can also have adverse effects. Rothschild (2010) discusses the problem of a rape crisis center therapist who had become

increasingly scared of violence through her work career. She was in the habit of unwittingly visualizing her clients' stories of rape, and from the perspective of the narrator – as if it were happening to herself. (Ibid. 139–140.) Should a shelter worker employ a similar technique, they could unintentionally begin to imagine themselves as victims of domestic abuse, or potential victims at the very least. This can be a frightening thought for obvious reasons. All interviewees listed some type of effects of work on their private life, and for many of them, they indeed manifested themselves specifically as fears for personal safety.

I(3): It can create some anxiety if you're not careful (laughs). Especially working at the shelter, you're talking to women, you're safety planning with them, about watching their back, being careful where they go. I don't think there's a way that won't seep into you.

The majority of the informants (four out of six) mentioned some type of mistrust of men in their responses. Through their work in the field of domestic violence, they have "seen enough patterns" and thus, become "more vigilant about men". While they realize that "not every man is like that" (violent) and do not want to generalize, they have difficulties trusting new people and tend to "see the red flags" everywhere. This is a logical result of heightened knowledge of violence. Those working directly with abused women are at a particularly high risk of such insecurities (Goldblatt & Buchbinder 2003). This demonstrates the burden emotional labor can place on the worker through its institutional demand for understanding and appropriately responding to clients' emotions. In their wish to help others, shelter workers often expose themselves to harmful influences.

One respondent had only noticed a change in her private life in terms of her world view – her religion and culture in particular. She was upset that her "culture uses religion as an excuse for injustice". Many of her clients shared her religious and ethnic background, which had prompted her to give extensive thought to the subject. Despite the fact that she is sometimes caught thinking about work even at home, she felt that overall, she had not been very affected by her work at the shelter. It should be noted that with this informant, the interview was shorter than with others, which may have had an impact on the level of depth in her responses. Valuable information may have been lost due to time limits.

Although the interviewees had experienced many frustrations and hard feelings at work, as well as noted changes in their personal lives, they were motivated to keep working with victims of violence. Moments of success give them an "enormous satisfaction in knowing that you're helping people, and that you're making a difference". They take pride in helping the client

find employment, or supporting them in becoming confident and independent. Having a part in positive life changes can be extremely awarding.

I(1): [T]hat's kind of my benefit, that I know that even if it's like a small contribution, to her success story... I did anything that I could to help her, then that's all that matters. That's what I gain out of it. Just knowing that I helped someone.

A special type of gratification comes from reaching the goal of emotional labor: that of empowering women. They enjoy seeing the change in their client, that she "doesn't feel so burdened and overwhelmed" anymore. They have seen the women grow as people and regain hope in their ability to build a community around people they can trust. Having witnessed the advancement of their clients, and celebrated their accomplishments, the workers know they have also completed their task. Their emotional labor has successfully resulted in the empowerment of their clients – from victim to survivor (Brosi & Rolling 2010).

Another positive outcome of shelter work was an increase in the worker's self-confidence. The interviewees felt that they knew themselves better, and had grown alongside their clients. They had learned a great deal from client work and made new discoveries about themselves, which had enabled them to develop their personalities. Several respondents also referred to an interesting side-effect of empowering their clients.

I(3): In a process of empowering others, you actually end up empowering yourself. In a lot of ways I do feel more empowered.

As noted earlier, workers in the field of domestic violence can experience fears and concerns for safety in their personal life due to their second-hand exposure to violence. However, the quote above brings forth an intriguing counter-phenomenon: that of attempting to influence another person, and ending up convincing oneself as well. The workers described their efforts to assure their clients that they are "worth it", and that "nobody deserves to be mistreated". It would appear that through this professional process, they gained more confidence in speaking up about injustice as private persons as well.

5 Concluding Remarks

In this final chapter, I summarize the findings of my research, as well as reflect on the manner in which it was conducted. In addition, I consider some implications of this research in terms of emotional labor, its practice in the field, and further research.

5.1 Summary

The purpose of this Master's thesis research was to examine the emotional labor of domestic violence shelter workers primarily working with diverse populations. My theoretical framework built on Hochschild's (1979, 1983) theory of emotional labor, with some additions from James (1989). Emotional labor is defined as work that 'requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others' (Hochschild 1983, 7). Surface acting and deep acting are ways of managing feelings. The former focuses on changing one's outward appearance, while the latter refers to self-inducing and displaying feelings through conscious mental work. (Ibid. 35–36.) Deep acting is not only 'control' or 'suppression' of emotions, but more broadly the act of evoking or shaping, as well as suppressing, feeling in oneself. It is often in response to a discrepancy between what a person feels and what they want to (or should) feel. (Hochschild 1979, 561–562.) James (1989, 26) adds that the worker must be able to 'understand and interpret the needs of others', as well as produce an appropriate response.

I collected the interview data in the summer of 2014 in an urban city in the United States. At the time, I was doing an internship at a domestic violence agency, and was able to find interviewees through the networks of my supervisor and co-workers. Six current or former employees at two different domestic violence shelters agreed to be interviewed for my thesis. They were all female, came from various immigrant backgrounds and represented different ethnicities (none being white), and their age ranged from mid-twenties to fifties. The interviews followed a standardized open-ended question pattern (Patton 1990), and lasted from 30 minutes to 1 hour and 8 minutes in length.

I used theoretically informed empirical analysis to analyze the transcribed interview data with guidance from previous theories (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 96). I employed existing theorizations on emotional labor as a method of finding related expressions in the data. Having identified such materials, I first focused on my primary research question: *What kind of*

emotional labor does work at a domestic violence shelter involve? To start off, I formed an image of the expectations placed on shelter workers by their organizational context. These include providing various services to clients, maintaining shelter structure, and establishing appropriate professional boundaries between the self and the client. The most significant goal that can be identified for shelter work is that of empowering clients. Workers hope that abused women will leave the shelter with a new sense of independence, and the ability to survive on their own.

Building on this basic foundation, I next considered factors related to the clients' trauma and cultural background, for professionals must be mindful of a variety of matters that might affect the clients' recovery process. As a result of domestic violence, the clients could be depressed, feel helpless, or react with heightened aggression. In addition, their cultural perspective could explain some of the obstacles they face to leaving the abuser and to assuming a more independent lifestyle. Shared aspects of identity as well as significant differences in experience between worker and client will call for varied responses in terms of emotional labor from the former. In practice, the act of hiding or suppressing different emotions appears to be the most common form, and it is often connected to either frustrations or becoming affected by stories on a personal level. The ability to maintain professional boundaries is central not only in maintaining a professional distance, but also in controlling the amount of emotional labor that is needed at work at a domestic violence shelter. The goal is to be supportive of clients' decisions regardless of any personal views; the clients must be enabled to regain control of their lives.

The last section of my analysis concentrated on my second interview question – *what type of effects have shelter workers experienced in their private lives due to their work at the shelter?* It would appear that hiding or suppressing emotions can be quite stressful. Due to the demand for empathy and understanding of the client's position, most interviewees also discussed their difficulties in trusting people, particularly men, due to their immersion into the field of domestic violence. Nevertheless, the positive impact of being able to help people, and witness the women's progress and empowerment was seen as a great motivation – enough to combat the negative sides of the job.

I would hope that domestic violence shelters and other service providers for survivors of violence would receive greater assistance and respect from governmental, public, and private supporters. Many services are run by non-profit organizations with limited funds, which severely diminishes their ability to respond to survivors' needs. With more staff and less time constraints, organizations could enable their employees to focus more closely on individual clients. In addition, it would be beneficial for everyone involved to include a section on

emotional labor in the 40-hour training. This would better prepare workers and volunteers for the demands of client work, and this particular way of facilitating empowerment.

5.2 Discussion

Data and Methods

To my knowledge, the client base of my interviewees consisted of cis women[18], who had for the most part experienced violence in heterosexual relationships. Therefore, the themes in this research cannot speak to non-mainstream experiences, such as those of workers in LGBTQIA+ shelters or other similar services. Indeed, it is highly probable that such populations and their specific contexts of violence would require a very different type of approach to emotional labor. Similarly, it should be noted that women can also be the perpetrators of violence (see e.g. Lattu 2008) – although Keskinen (2005) remarks that some of this violence can be in self-defense, and might not cause physical injuries as severe as those inflicted by men on women. Nevertheless, it is important to challenge the hegemonic tale of male-on-female domestic violence, for it can hide from view many other forms and render survivors unable to disclose their experiences. Should an abused person or their perpetrator not fit into the popular myth of a helpless female victim and her aggressive male abuser, it could be difficult to seek for help. It is unfortunate that I was unable to consider these topics at length in this research. However, it would have been much more difficult to access relevant data of such taboo themes. My sample can give insight into some specific conditions, and my goal has been to describe this particular environment in as much detail as possible.

Reflecting on my thesis research process, I am quite satisfied with the results. The theory of emotional labor, the interview data, and the method of theoretically informed empirical analysis worked well together and produced decent findings. While none of the interview questions directly referred to emotional labor, the responses they induced contained plenty of related materials. This suggests that the standardized question pattern was well thought-out and connected to the theoretical frame. In the analysis phase, Hochschild's theory was an extremely useful guide. Combined with the flexible method, it assisted in finding a direction without completely defining it. The data was able to 'speak for itself', so to say. The context-specific forms of emotional labor were represented in all interviews. There was individual fluctuation in which forms were employed more often, which is to be expected.

[18] Assigned female at birth and comfortable with this identity. For more information, see e.g. Serano (2007).

An issue commonly associated with qualitative research methods is that of the small sample size, and consequent impossibility of generalizing findings in a quantitative sense (Patton 1990, 486). A representative sample should bear proportional resemblance to the total population on which a researcher would like to make generalizations (Mason 2002, 125). Survey research utilizes randomly drawn representative samples, addressing potential biases by ensuring that 'certain types of people are not systematically excluded or under-represented' (De Vaus 2004, 70). When the final sample reflects the population it is intended to represent, while being smaller in shape, it is possible to use probability theory to draw statistical generalizations about patterns in the wider population (ibid. 69–70). My small sample of six qualitative interviews naturally cannot offer generalizable information on all domestic violence shelter workers. It can, however, produce very detailed information about and understanding of specific cases and situations (Patton 1990, 14). It has been my goal to form a comprehensive image of a particular local context: that of six shelter workers primarily catering to the needs of diverse populations in an urban city in the United States. Their stories also partially represent those of other emotional laborers in the two domestic violence shelters they worked at. In order to increase the reliability of my findings in relation to a wider population of domestic violence professionals, I have referred to relevant research to support the analysis throughout the process.

Theoretical Considerations

Based on the topics covered in the analysis section, the full complexity of shelter work is coming into view. Shelter workers must be masters of understanding the complicated reality of each individual client. In fact, I would argue that they should constantly employ the tool of intersectionality to make sense of their clients' personalities and life situations. Intersectionality is used to analyze how social categorizations such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality interact and produce different kinds of societal inequalities and unjust social relations. Gender works in interplay with these other categorizations. Societal mechanisms such as dominance/subordination and privilege/lack of privilege can be analyzed using intersectionality as an entrance point. (Lykke 2010, 50–52.)

In the context of shelter work, this intersectional analysis can take the form of regarding each demographic category a client falls into. Is she specifically vulnerable or advantaged due to her membership in an ethnic, cultural, or linguistic group? What kind of discrimination does she face both inside the group and outside of it, as the representative of a minority? Does she have education or networks that may protect her from further harm? It is of

utmost importance to understand these different factors, for they may explain some of the effects domestic violence has had on the women. Disadvantage on any given level could exacerbate the abuse, whereas privilege offers ways to fight back more effectively.

Knowledge of the intersections of hierarchies in the case of each client may provide valuable insight into her trauma. Which aspects of her identity have suffered the most? Which tactics did her abuser use, and what impact did that have on her self-esteem or mental health? What are the harmful messages she may have internalized? It is only after a comprehensive view of these themes has been formed that a shelter worker can start to formulate a plan for effective assistance for the client.

Drawing from the above theorizations, I suggest that an understanding of emotional labor as a *process* in the context of domestic violence shelter work is in order. Firstly, one must have an idea of the goal of emotional labor. As discussed earlier, empowering the clients and equipping them with skills necessary for independent survival appear to be central objectives. Secondly, the different aspects of her identity must be thoroughly mapped, as they can help explain the particular effects of the violence she has experienced. Finally, the worker chooses an appropriate approach for the client in question, based on her culturally sensitive needs and trauma type. Emotional labor should be customized to evoke positive feelings in the client.

As established in section 4.3, the reality of shelter work is not quite simple enough to allow for such careful considerations. The workers are often overcome with personal feelings of frustration or other emotional turmoil, and must hide it from their clients. In my interview data, most of the emotional labor was connected to such efforts. There were also some references to "trying to figure out the right words to use" and several to being supportive. While it is unclear how much workers are able to focus on this part, I would suggest that it is a central element in providing quality services to abused women. Once the worker is in control of her emotions, concentration should be directed at investigating what the most important immediate needs of the client are. In terms of emotional support, it would be helpful to explore some of the topics that bother the client, and to consider some potential remedies. How can the client be empowered to trust in herself and her abilities despite the attacks of her abuser on her self-esteem? An understanding of intersectional realities could be of use in this process.

The choice of domestic violence as the theoretical frame for abuse reflects the priorities of a North American context. This selection was reasonable for several connected reasons, the most significant being my interview data, the related advocacy discourse, and my personal future aspirations. I have been able to immerse myself into this unique setting through this research process, which will undoubtedly benefit me in my future career in the field. Much of

the research I have referred to is also from scholars in the United States; this was partly a conscious choice that supported my specific interests, but also due to the fact that such a vast and populous country simply has more researchers in many fields.

Had I chosen a different term to replace domestic violence, my research interest would naturally have shifted. Family violence has been a popular concept in Finland (Keskinen 2005), and it would have required the inclusion of children in the family context. Intimate partner violence is somewhat interchangeable with domestic violence, but could potentially have excluded some of the populations served in the shelters from which I gathered my data. Keskinen (ibid.) utilizes the term sexualized violence to highlight the connections to (hetero)sexual relationships. This could possibly have offered an interesting angle at the topic, however, I felt that it was sensible to choose domestic violence. Any other term might have required changing some of my interview questions, if not finding an altogether different population to interview.

To briefly contemplate on a wider discussion of violence, I turn to the sentiments of Ronkainen and Näre (2008). They remark that while the ability to resort to violence is universal, there is a cultural and gendered dimension to how violence is structured, what forms it takes in practice, how it is valued or how it is judged. The framework of gendered violence is interested in how the society and different institutionalized practices give meaning to violence based on gender; for example, which perpetrators and what type of violence have historically been considered societal problems, and whose experiences of violence have been neglected. The umbrella term of violence against women aims at making visible such forms of violence that are typically experienced by women, and that are often forgotten when violence is discussed in gender neutral terms. (Ibid. 14–15, 21–22.) While realizing that male-on-female violence is far from the only form of gender-based violence, I am personally committed to advancing the fight to end violence against women, and therefore, specifically interested in themes relevant to workers in this particular field – such as emotional labor and its effect on the workers.

In terms of further research, it would be interesting to explore whether or not these findings can be replicated in similar contexts. If one were to make comparisons between different distinct cultural groups as client populations, for example, what kinds of similarities and difference could be found in the emotional labor of the workers? Are some personal feelings easier to be dealt with and why could this be? Alternatively, this type of examination could be conducted with professionals working with the LGBTQIA+ populations, or female perpetrators – or perpetrators of violence in general. What are the norms and values that are being tested in those contexts, which conflicts are the most challenging to overcome?

Diversity and Racism

Discussions on 'diversity' often tend to center around race or ethnicity, and indeed, I also titled the theory section on the matter 'Women of Color'. However, I specified that membership in a racial or ethnic group is often tied to a specific culture, religion, or language, among other things. The core of domestic violence has similarities across the board, but these factors may in part explain the context of violence, the tactics chosen by the perpetrator, and the difficulties in breaking free from the abuse. My informants mostly spoke of cultural issues, not race or ethnicity. Their clients were held back in various ways by the norms, expectations, and values of their community.

Another hindrance to assisting minority populations comes from their often marginalized position. This is a result of widespread institutionalized racism, which Jones (2000) defines as 'differential access to the goods, services, and opportunities of society by race' (ibid. 1212). It is manifested in material conditions, such as access to quality education, housing, and employment, as well as access to power. There may not be an identifiable perpetrator, and often the disadvantage is inherited. (Ibid. 1212.) Abused minority women face multiple obstacles to building a new life, should they be able to leave the abuser for good. They might have to start from next to nothing. Shelter workers have much work to do in order to help these clients advance, both in terms of practical matters and in boosting their self-confidence.

The Effects of Emotional Labor

It is no surprise that emotional labor in such a complex environment can be a burden. The institutional demand for understanding and appropriately responding to clients' emotions is often connected to harmful phenomena such as vicarious trauma, secondary trauma, and compassion fatigue. Workers must invest much of themselves into the work. In her examination of rape work, Yancey Martin (2005, 194, 198, 201) noted that negative work feelings can include discomfort, distress, anger at the system and society, as well as powerlessness. Empathy might indeed be dangerous – the worker might become unable to separate her client's state of mind from her own (Rothschild 2010, 66–86). People employed in the field of trauma or violence work must thus pay special attention to self-care, finding the ways that help them care for themselves and unwind (Hannus 2011, 222). One would hope that anyone coming into this field is prepared for what they are getting themselves into.

Despite the evident negative sides to shelter work, or any work in the realm of violence advocacy, it is clear that there are various upsides as well. In Henderson's (2001) article, emphasis is given to the positive attributes of emotional labor. Nurses' ability to both experience strong emotions at work as well as use those emotions for improving their practice is considered a high-level skill, which requires 'great honesty, tenacity and perseverance'. The skills that come along with nursing experience are used by nurses as both professional and private persons, and the two are indeed often difficult to separate. (Ibid. 135.) Yancey Martin (2005, 202–203) emphasizes the positivity of emotional bonds between the worker and rape victims, as well as the uplift of helping them 'grow and 'turn from victims into survivors'. Similar themes could be found in my interview data with shelter workers. They described the "enormous satisfaction" of helping others, and how "it does something to my heart" to witness the change in clients. It seems apparent that this is enough motivation to overcome the downsides of emotional labor for many workers.

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Attachments

Attachment 1: Informed Consent Form

This research project is a mandatory part of the Master's Degree Program in Gender Studies at University of Tampere. The student, Ms. Jenna Pasanen (born Jan 4 1988), is supervised by Taina Kinnunen, Professor of Gender Studies. This research does not have any funding.

The purpose of this research is to gain information on shelter workers' experiences with female survivors of violence. The specific areas of interest are everyday work at the shelter, relationship to clients, and the effects of shelter work on private life. The results will hopefully provide the workers with some tools to reflect on their profession.

Participation in this research is voluntary. Information will be gathered during one interview of approximately 30 minutes to 2 hours. The interview will be recorded and later transcribed.

Research findings will be reported in a manner which prevents identification of any participant or person mentioned in the interviews.

When the interviews are transcribed, the names of the interviewees and of other persons mentioned in the interviews will be changed into pseudonyms. The names of organizations/institutions and place names will be categorized to prevent any identification (e.g. Peters & Peters into [law firm], Tottenham Hotspur into [football club], Starbucks into [café], Guatemala into [country in Latin America], San Francisco into [urban city in the United States], etc.).

In order to protect the privacy of participants and other persons mentioned in the interviews, the supervisor as well as other members of the Gender Studies Thesis Seminar (small group) will be requested to sign a confidentiality statement.

When the research is completed, interview audio tapes and contact information to participants will be destroyed.

With your permission, anonymized interview transcriptions will be archived permanently at the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (see http://www.fsd.uta.fi/en/index.html) for scientific research and teaching. Any student, teacher, or researcher wishing to use this data must state in their access application the purpose for which they need the data and sign an agreement which binds them to specified conditions of use.

If you have any further questions, please contact Professor Taina Kinnunen at taina.kinnunen@uta.fi or Jenna Pasanen at jenna.pasanen@uta.fi.

Attachment 2: Interview Questions

Everyday work

Please describe a typical day of work at the shelter.

What is a typical client at the shelter like?

Please describe the admittance of a client to the shelter. What happens there?

What kind of information do you receive on her background and situation?

Please describe your typical interaction with clients.

How do you help a client? What are the things you do for a client?

Relationship to client

Can you describe your relationship to clients?

In your opinion, what role does empathy play in interactions with clients?

In what ways do clients show their emotions, and how do you respond?

What kind of level of emotional engagement does your work require? Can you give examples of specific situations?

Would you say that you connect with some clients more strongly than others? Is it easier to understand where some clients come from?

What kind of clients? Why do you think that is?

Please describe some feelings and thoughts that arise in situations of strong identification. How do you manage them?

Do you find it difficult to identify with some clients? What kind of clients?

Do you think it affects how you work or how you help clients?

If you find it difficult to empathize with, help, or relate to a client, what kind of feelings and thoughts do you experience? How do you manage them?

Does your level of identification affect your work? Does it make it easier or more difficult?
In your opinion, is it easier or better to identify strongly with a client, or to maintain a boundary to them, or something in between? Please explain.

Ideal worker

What kind of person would be an ideal worker at a shelter? What kind of qualities and characteristics do they possess?

How does a professional shelter worker behave?

How do you feel about your own performance at work? Would you say that you are an ideal worker yourself?

What kinds of people would you not encourage to seek employment at a shelter?

What kinds of things would you consider unprofessional of a worker at a shelter? Acts, attitudes, speech, behavior?

What type of support do you hope to receive from your co-workers?

If you could describe an ideal work environment, what would it include? What role does the work community play?

Effects of Shelter Work

Does shelter work have an effect on your private life?

Have you experienced changes in personal relationships due to your work at the shelter?

Have you experienced changes in self-image and/or world view?

Please describe some negative effects of your work.

What kinds of things help you cope with these negative effects?

How does the workplace help you cope with work-related stress? Can you describe some of the services etc. they provide, if there are any?

Are you happy with these services?

I could imagine that some workers gravitate towards this type of work because of their personal experiences. Do you think this could be true?

What do you gain from this work?

What keeps you motivated?